

See Your Doctor

Picking The Right LASIK Surgeon—Here's How

(NAPSA)—LASIK, a popular vision correction option for reducing or eliminating the need for glasses or contacts, can help you enjoy sports and a fully active lifestyle.

It's important, however, to pick the right LASIK surgeon.

"LASIK is surgery and it involves something precious—your eyes," says Robert Maloney, M.D., M.A., a board-certified, fellowship-trained specialist in vision correction surgery. "You should focus on finding the best-qualified surgeon for your LASIK."

Dr. Maloney recommends you find a LASIK surgeon who is:

- An ophthalmologist (an M.D.), certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology.

- Experienced. "You want a surgeon who has performed at least 200 LASIK procedures," Dr. Maloney says. "Experienced surgeons also often have additional certifications, teach at a medical school or participate in clinical research."

- Willing to educate you and answer your questions. "Education and counseling are among the most important things we do as surgeons. Patients need to know about the potential benefits and limitations so that when they make a decision, they know that it's the right decision for them."

- Able to make you feel relaxed and confident. "The surgeon and his or her entire office should have a sense of professionalism and should fit your personal style."

- Dr. Maloney also points out that "A surgical consultation should never be a sales process. You should never feel you're being pressured to do something you don't want to do. Also, remember,



A LASIK surgeon is a medical professional—not a salesman.

the goal in LASIK is to achieve the best vision, not to save the last dollar.

- "LASIK is wonderful," he adds, "but there are limits to what it can achieve. In most cases, it won't give you better-than-perfect vision. And you might still need glasses—for example, for reading—as your eyes age. Don't expect miracles. There are risks with any surgery, LASIK included. A responsible surgeon will tell you about them. Counseling should also cover the recovery process and possible side effects. You are trusting your eyes to the surgeon and the practice. You need to feel at ease. If you don't, you may be picking up on signals that something is wrong, or just that this surgeon isn't for you."

Dr. Maloney recommends you get a recommendation for a LASIK surgeon from family, friends or, best, a trusted physician. And when you meet the surgeon, be sure to get references as well. "Do your homework and 'interview' the surgeon to make sure you're at ease. Research up front will help make sure you have a good LASIK experience."