



Eye on Health

Studies On New Form Of Laser Surgery Look Promising

(NAPSA)—A newer form of LASIK, the surgical procedure intended to reduce a person's dependency on glasses or contact lenses, is now coming into focus. Called "custom LASIK," the procedure has been widely available for only about a year and a half.

Doctors and companies are promoting it as being better than regular LASIK, but it is more expensive. Is it really worth the extra cost? Is custom or wavefront-guided LASIK delivering what was promised in terms of higher quality of vision than regular LASIK?

When surgeons and researchers gathered in San Diego for the annual Symposium of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, studies comparing the two LASIK procedures were discussed.

Independent researchers, such as Navy surgeon, Captain Steve Schallhorn are finding that custom LASIK is better. According to Captain Steve Hallhorn, part of a Navy program providing this type of surgery: "In terms of overall quality of vision, custom LASIK yields sharper and higher quality vision compared to conventional LASIK. We are finding that custom LASIK, without the use of glasses, is giving many patients the ability to see as well or better than they could see with glasses before surgery."

Schallhorn's presentation compared the results the Navy Medical Center obtained in patients using conventional LASIK versus custom LASIK. With conventional LASIK, 89 percent of 908 procedures achieved 20/20 or better vision after six months. By comparison 97 percent of 34 patients using the new custom technique achieved 20/20 or better. "More significant," said



Getting a good look is a new form of "custom LASIK" that gives higher quality vision.

Schallhorn, "is the improved quality of vision, fewer problems with halos and glare, better night vision, and higher patient satisfaction based on a detailed patient questionnaire."

Custom LASIK analyzes light reflected from the back of the patient's eye, to see how the light is distorted. Special equipment then makes a custom treatment plan for that eye and guides the laser in applying the treatment.

Schallhorn cautioned that the results of the custom group are on a small number of patients so far, but this is an ongoing study with intensive evaluation.

"Not everyone is a candidate for LASIK, complications are a real possibility, and some patients may still need glasses," Schallhorn cautioned adding, "the most satisfied patients are those who are well informed and have realistic expectations for what their results are likely to be."

To learn more, visit www.eyesurgeryeducation.com, the patient education Web site of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery Foundation.