



Dr Dale Harrison

Specialist Ophthalmologist

What should I expect during and after Lasik surgery?

During Surgery

The surgery should take less than 30 minutes. You will lie on your back in a theatre room containing the laser system. Wear comfortable clothing. A numbing drop will be placed in your eye, the area around your eye will be cleaned, and an instrument called a lid speculum will be used to hold your eyelids open.

A suction ring will be placed on your eye and pressure will be applied. Your vision will dim while the suction ring is on and you may feel the pressure and experience some discomfort during this part of the procedure. Dr Harrison will then create the corneal flap and fold it back. The laser will be positioned over your eye and you will be asked to stare at a green light.

This light is to help you keep your eye fixed on one spot once the laser comes on. When your eye is in the correct position, the laser will be started. As the laser removes corneal tissue, some people have reported a smell similar to burning hair. Dr Harrison will have programmed the computer to vaporize a particular amount of tissue based on the measurements taken at your baseline evaluation. After the pulses of laser energy vaporize the corneal tissue, the flap is put back into position.

A shield will be placed over your eye at the end of the procedure as protection, since no stitches are used to hold the flap in place. It is important for you to wear this shield to prevent you from rubbing your eye and putting pressure on your eye while you sleep, and to protect your eye from accidentally being hit or poked until the flap has healed.

After Surgery

When the anaesthetic wears off, your eye may burn, itch, or feel like there is something in it. You may experience some discomfort, or in some cases, mild pain and you may want to take a mild pain reliever. This can last for up to four hours. Best thing to do is go home after surgery and sleep!

Both your eyes may tear or water. Your vision will probably be hazy or blurry. You will instinctively want to rub your eye, but don't! Rubbing your eye could dislodge the flap, requiring further treatment. In addition, you may experience sensitivity to light, glare, starbursts or haloes around lights, or the whites of your eye may look red or bloodshot. A pair of sunglasses may be necessary. These symptoms should improve considerably within the first few days after surgery. You should take a few days off from work until these symptoms subside.

You should contact Dr Harrison immediately and not wait for your scheduled visit, if you experience severe pain, or if your vision or other symptoms get worse instead of better. You will be given eye drops to take at home to help prevent infection and inflammation. Your first post-operative appointment will be within 24 hours after surgery and at regular intervals for at least the first four months.

You will be advised to use artificial tears to help lubricate the eye. Do not resume wearing a contact lens in the operated eye, even if your vision is blurry.



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You should wait one to three days following surgery before beginning any non-contact sports, depending on the amount of activity required and how you feel. To help prevent infection, you may need to wait for up to one week after surgery before using lotions, creams, or make-up around the eye.

You should also avoid swimming and using hot tubs or whirlpools for a week. Strenuous contact sports should not be attempted for at least 12 weeks after surgery. It is important to protect your eyes from anything that might get in them and from being hit or bumped.

During the first few months after surgery, your vision may fluctuate. Glare, haloes, difficulty driving at night, and other visual symptoms may also persist during this stabilization period. If further correction or enhancement is necessary, you should wait until your eye measurements are consistent for two consecutive visits at least 3 months apart before re-operation.

Contact Dr Harrison immediately, if you develop any new, unusual or worsening symptoms at any point after surgery. Such symptoms could signal a problem that, if not treated early enough, may lead to a loss of vision.