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Question:

*My wife is nearsighted. She doesn't like how she looks in glasses and she doesn't feel her vision is that much improved with contacts. What surgical options are available to her?*

Answer:

LASIK surgery has advanced since its introduction in the late 1990's. Today it can help the vast majority of people who wear glasses. Nearsightedness *and* astigmatism can be improved, because with new technology LASIK surgery can be customized to your visual needs, replacing glasses and contact lenses. This "Wave Front" technology is interesting because it measures light exiting the eye and corrects for irregularities that have the potential to cause glare, halos and ghost images. This procedure is approved for the correction of nearsightedness and is currently undergoing FDA trials for farsightedness which thus far have had excellent results.

*Are there any other procedures available besides LASIK?*

For people who are extremely nearsighted, a new procedure called Phakic Intraocular lenses that has been available for over 10 years in Europe and Asia has recently been approved by the FDA and is now available for use in the U.S. This procedure is somewhat similar to the intraocular lenses or implants used in cataract surgery except that, in this case, the lens of the eye is not removed. The implant is either put in front of or behind the iris, the colored part of the eye. This treatment has been very effective for patients who are too nearsighted for LASIK and wear "Coke<sup>TM</sup> bottle" glasses.

For those patients who have perfect vision for distance, but wear reading glasses, CK or Conductive Keratoplasty can be helpful. This technique is especially effective in patients who wear monovision contact lenses (the dominant eye for distance; the non-dominant eye for reading). This procedure is done with radio waves.

Also, for patients undergoing cataract surgery, we are seeing the use of intraocular lenses or implants that help the eye accommodate, allowing patients to see distance and near. This is only the beginning of the revolution of refractive surgery.

*Are there other new procedures that may be available in the future?*

On the horizon, we are looking forward to presbyopic correction; allowing those over 40 to read without glasses. Some consider this the final frontier of ophthalmology

In the future, new techniques will allow almost anyone to see without glasses. Yes, glasses will become obsolete!