

Eye On Health

True or False: Is LASIK Permanent?

(NAPSA)—One of the most frequently asked questions about LASIK is: How long does it last? Leading eye surgeon Eric D. Donnenfeld, M.D. and member of the American Refractive Surgery Council, has an answer.

“LASIK is a surgical procedure that uses computer-guided lasers to permanently correct nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism. The prescription you come in with is the prescription we correct,” he explained. “It’s a popular misconception that LASIK patients sometimes regress. In fact, what is more likely occurring is their nearsightedness or farsightedness actually progresses. Following LASIK, most people have 20/20 vision and no longer rely on glasses or contact lenses.”

However, there is some confusion on whether LASIK is permanent. Here are three facts you should know:

Truth: LASIK is permanent. LASIK will permanently fix your original vision problem. The imperfections that your eye surgeon corrected will not come back and your improved eyesight will never return to the previous prescription before LASIK. However, there’s a very slight chance that your shortsightedness or farsightedness will progress over time. This doesn’t mean your eyes are returning to the way they were before your surgery.

Truth: LASIK doesn’t prevent eyes from aging. As you get older, your eyes lose their ability to focus on nearby objects—it’s called presbyopia. With age, it becomes more difficult to read in dimly lit conditions, read the



With LASIK treatment you can achieve 20/20 vision without glasses, but you can’t stave off the effects of time on your eyes.

fine print on a label or do close-up tasks. Just because you’ve had LASIK doesn’t mean you’ve treated or prevented the symptoms of presbyopia, so at some point you will likely need reading glasses to see close up. An option is to have monovision LASIK, in which one eye is corrected for distance and one eye for reading.

Truth: Some people may need a LASIK enhancement. A very small percentage of LASIK patients, less than 2 percent when modern technologies are used, don’t reach their vision goal initially with the vision correction procedure. When this occurs, a LASIK enhancement may be performed to achieve clear vision. Another reason you may need a LASIK enhancement is if your vision changes significantly over time. Over the course of a decade, the chance that you’ll need an enhancement is about 10 percent.

Learn More

If you have any other questions about LASIK, see your eye care professional and visit www.americanrefrativesurgery.org.