**The evolution of Lasik**

Four steps to better vision

1. **Step 1:** A flap is cut using a microkeratome, which is affixed to the eye. This is akin to opening the cover of a book. There are two methods of cutting the flap: using microkeratomes, which involve blade, and femtosecond lasers, which are bladeless.

2. **Step 2:** Once the flap has been cut and opened, an excimer laser is used to remove tissue from the centre of the cornea to reshape it, correcting the refractive error.

3. **Step 3:** After correcting the cornea, the flap is replaced – like closing the cover of a book – and allowed to heal naturally without stitches.

4. **Step 4:** As a flap.

Bubbles within the cornea, creating a “hole” in the centre, like a buttonhole, said Dr Lee. This is akin to opening the cover of a book. There are two methods of cutting the flap: using microkeratomes, which involve blade, and femtosecond lasers, which are bladeless.

Both methods use wavefront optimised Lasik, a type of machine which corrects refraction errors while maintaining the natural shape of the cornea to reduce complications such as glare, halos, and other night-time visual aberrations.

Though more expensive, bladeless Lasik is worth it, said Dr Poh Yong Seng, a consultant eye surgeon at Camden Medical Centre. The current machines have enabled a great improvement in the quality of the refractive error correction. The third improvement is in the machinery used to track the eye movement; the latest generation of femtosecond lasers also creates flaps in 10 to 12 seconds.

Dr Chan said the technology also allows the surgeon to do the surgery faster, reducing the time needed to do the procedure on each eye. This means less time for other patients.

Surgical skill critical

Dr Per Yung Ming, 39, consultant eye surgeon at Jerry Tan Eye Surgery at Camden Medical Centre, who has never contemplated Lasik surgery, said: “I’m a low myope with -2.00 dioptre in both eyes. I have not had any problem. I have not had any problems with dryness. He did the surgery well. According to me, the chance of myopia recurrence is less than 1 per cent. Ever since the procedure, I have had a smooth recovery without any side effects.”

Dr Joyce Lee

I went for Lasik two years ago. The dryness lasted for a month, but it’s long gone now. The vision is one in ten eyes clearer than the other, but it’s quite insignificant, unless I’m trying to read a word that is some distance away. All in all, I’ve never had any problem with dryness. I do not undergo Lasik themselves. They would rather recommend contact lenses, which are more suitable for me. They consider me lucky to have minimum myopia (1.00 dioptre) and I have no presbyopia at the moment. I can function well without glasses, be it during surgery, reading, driving or performing other daily activities. However, there is no need for me to undergo Lasik surgery in the future. I’m just a myth because people think anyone who has good eye sight and perfectly normal vision can undergo Lasik Surgery.

Dr Steven San, 50, consultant ophthalmologist at Optima Lasik Centre at Camden Medical Centre and a senior consultant at Jerry Tan Eye Surgery at Camden Medical Centre, who has never undergone Lasik surgery, said: “I consider myself lucky to have minimum myopia (-1.00 dioptre) and I have no presbyopia at the moment. I can function well without glasses, be it during surgery, reading, driving or performing other daily activities. However, there is no need for me to undergo Lasik surgery in the future. I’m just a myth because people think anyone who has good eye sight and perfectly normal vision can undergo Lasik Surgery.”

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