

SAMPLE CONSENT FORM FOR LASIK SURGERY

Explanation

LASIK surgery may be performed on the eyes one at a time, within three months of each other. The eyes may also be surgically corrected at the same time (simultaneously). However, simultaneous bilateral LASIK surgery can represent a level of risk that is not typically present when the eyes are corrected in separate procedures.

You should, therefore, understand both the benefits and risks before you choose a specific approach to LASIK surgery.

Simultaneous Bilateral LASIK

Risks

Complications in both eyes at the same time: There are risks of infection, clouding of the cornea, scars on the cornea, bleeding in the eye and retinal damage. These complications are not common, but when eyes are done simultaneously, the complications usually occur in both eyes. When they do occur, complications can cause diminished vision or even blindness (temporary or permanent).

It is appropriate to note that not all complications occur immediately. Some, such as scarring or cloudiness of the cornea, can take time to develop and time to resolve (get better). If this occurs in both eyes, the prolonged healing period can have a significant effect on a patient's lifestyle.

Inappropriate correction of vision: If, after healing, vision is noted to be over or under-corrected it will probably be inappropriately corrected in both eyes. This may require re-treatment and, if it does, the re-treatment will be needed for both eyes.

Length of recovery time: Though recovery is usually rapid, you may recover more slowly. In delayed recoveries, patients may have some blurred vision, glare at night, or 'ghost' images. If one or more of these symptoms occur during prolonged healing, they can interfere with your activities of daily life. This interference can be significant when both eyes are affected.

During LASIK surgery, a flap is created on the cornea which can become dislodged if the eye is traumatized during healing. When bilateral simultaneous LASIK is done, these flaps may become dislodged, requiring treatment.

Side effects: All surgery has potential for side effects. In LASIK, those effects are not common and not usually severe. However, when a patient with simultaneous bilateral LASIK experiences significant side effects such as glare, increased sensitivity to light, haze in the cornea, or ghost images, the effects usually occur in both eyes and can cause decreased vision and/or other problems.

Benefits

Ease: Having surgery done on both eyes during the same visit can reduce time loss from a job and is generally more convenient for you.

Length of recovery time: Vision in both eyes can be stabilized more quickly. This is more convenient when you have trouble wearing a contact in the eye which still has not been corrected.

Expense: Fees for simultaneous bilateral LASIK may be less than if each eye was done individually. This, along with less time off work, can represent a savings.

After you have read and understood this information on simultaneous bilateral LASIK surgery, please initial and date here: _____

LASIK Done on Each Eye at Different Times (Unilaterally)

Risks

LASIK done on each eye at different times poses the same kinds of risks as those specified in the preceding section of this document (under complications, side effects, inaccurate correction of vision, and possible slow recovery). As in bilateral simultaneous LASIK these risks can be as serious as loss of vision. However, if any of these complications occur during or following LASIK done on only one eye, the problem usually will happen in only that eye.

LASIK done on each eye at different times also has the following specific risks:

Inconvenience: Two surgeries require two of everything – two recovery periods, two sets of pre-operative and post-operative visits, and more time away from work or other responsibilities.

Having two surgeries may cost more; your insurance carrier could request a physician call or letter explaining this choice.

Benefits

Limits on complications: Though you still run the risk of experiencing a complication of the surgery (this is not common), it occurs in one eye, not both. The nature and severity of the complication allow you and your doctor to discuss whether you should go ahead with the second surgery or decide not to have it.

If the complication is a slowly developing and slowly healing one, such as cornea scarring or cloudiness, the second surgery can be delayed to accommodate this situation.

Correction of vision: Your physician can observe your recovery from the first surgery and adjust, if necessary, treatment for the second eye; this sometimes can lead to a more accurate correction in the second eye.

Ease of recovery: While the eye which was corrected is healing, you can continue to function with your other eye.

Your ability to determine how LASIK will best work for you: Having LASIK done on one eye at a time gives you the chance to evaluate the results before you continue on with the second eye. People over 40 can evaluate whether they are comfortable with the change in their close vision. Some decide to have the second eye corrected differently so that they do not need glasses for close vision.

After you have read and understood this information on unilateral LASIK surgery, please initial and date here: _____

Surgical Consent:
Simultaneous Bilateral or Each Eye at Different Times

I have read and understand the above explanation of the risks and benefits of:

- simultaneous bilateral LASIK, and
- LASIK done on each eye at different times.

I understand that this document does not contain all the possible risks, benefits or complications that might occur in either of these surgical choices.

I have discussed both surgical approaches with my physician, and my questions have been answered.

I wish to have Simultaneous Bilateral LASIK surgery

If I have chosen a bilateral procedure, my reason/s are as follows (*check all that apply*):

- Convenience
 - Faster recovery (not guaranteed)
 - Contact lens intolerance or difficulty wearing contacts
 - Less time away from work
 - Removal of possible vision imbalance between treated and untreated eyes
- I wish to have LASIK surgery done on only one eye at this time (check one)
- Right
 - Left

Patient Signature _____ Date _____

Physician Signature _____ Date _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____