eye institute

the visionaries

The New Zealand Guide to

Vision Correction

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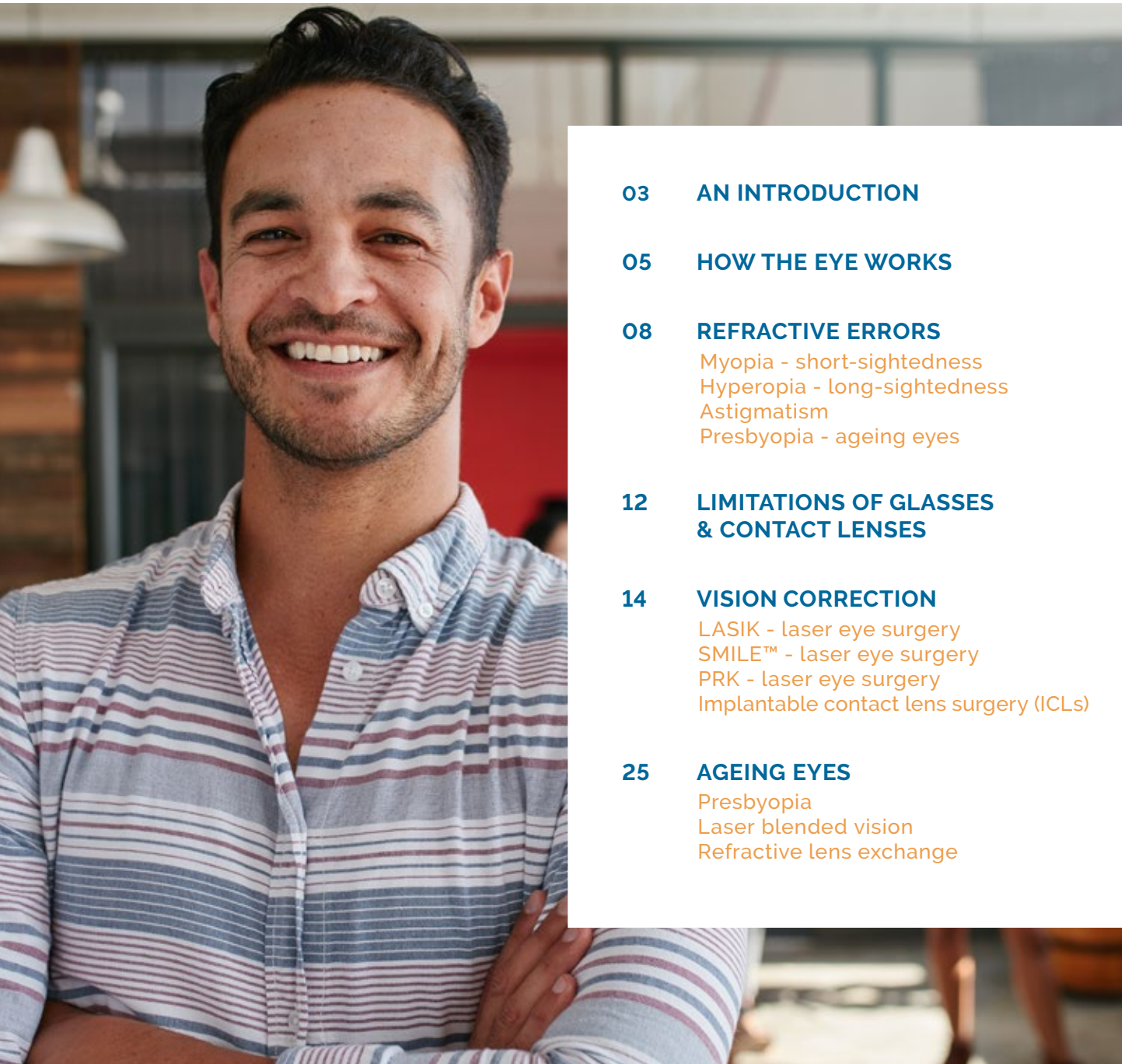


Introduction

Break free from the restraints of glasses or contact lenses. At Eye Institute, we are committed to providing you with a truly outstanding experience every step of your vision journey.

Learn about the vision correction options available and the visual concerns these can address in this comprehensive guide.

An outstanding vision experience at Eye Institute

Our gifted specialists and advanced technologies make the incredible, life-changing gift of improved eyesight an everyday reality.

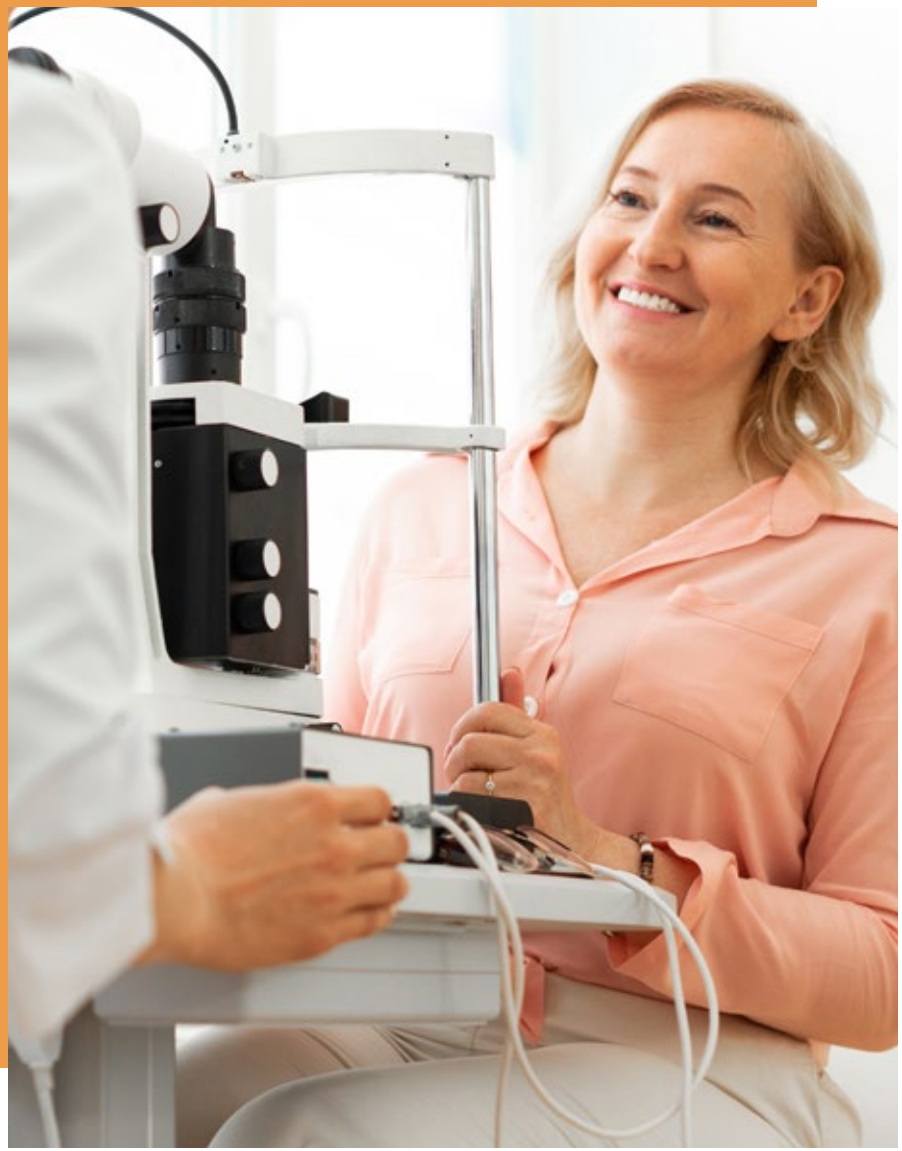
Our Eye Institute teams are dedicated to providing outstanding patient care. We work to make a real difference to people's quality of life, to support their freedom and independence by making their vision as good as it can be.

Eye Institute is extremely fortunate to house 21 world-class surgeons across our Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Blenheim and Dunedin facilities. Our surgeons are invited to present on the latest techniques and advancements in ophthalmic treatment at events around New Zealand and around the world.

That's enough about us. It's time to move on to the exciting part, which is getting you up to speed on everything you need to know to achieve freedom from glasses and contact lenses!

How the eye works

When light stimulates the nerve cells in the retina, messages are sent along the optic nerve to the brain.



How the eye works

The human eye is an incredible instrument that relies on light and lenses to form images. There are many similarities between the human eye and a camera, including:

- A variable-sized aperture or hole called the pupil. This regulates the amount of light that passes through.
- A lens system, which includes a front clear window of the eye (the cornea). and, a spherical lens inside the eye behind the iris (the coloured part of the eye).
- Like the film in older cameras or sensors in traditional cameras, the retina is a light-sensitive neural layer that collects light reflected from the surrounding environment to form an image, which is then sent to the brain.
- An optical zoom controlled by a muscular system. This changes the size of the pupil, the shape of the lens and the movements of the eye.

Light first passes through the cornea which focuses light through he pupil at the front of the eye. The lens which is inside the eye between pupil and retina further bends the light to focus it on the retina.

The retina is full of sensory cells called 'rods' and 'cones', which change the particles of light into electrical signals. Our nerves send these signals to the brain, and the brain interprets this as an image. When you look at something, four things must happen:

1. The image must 'reduce' to fit on to the retina.
2. The scattered light must focus at the surface of the retina.
3. The image must curve to match the curve of the retina.
4. The brain must interpret the image as vision.

For this to work, muscles attached to the lens must contract and relax to change the shape of the lens system. This helps to keep the object focused on the retina, even when your eyes move. Your nervous system controls this complex set of muscle movements.

Most vision problems occur when the eye cannot focus images onto the retina. The most common problems are to do with the shape of the cornea, the length of the eye, and/or the elasticity of the lens.

We call these common issues:
Short-sightedness, Long-sightedness, Astigmatism and Presbyopia.

In the vast majority of cases, we can correct these issues with laser eye surgery, implantable contact lenses or refractive lens exchange.

Refractive errors

Refractive errors are a type of vision problem that makes it hard to see clearly.

Most common refractive errors

Myopia *Short-Sightedness*

When you're short-sighted, you can focus on close objects while objects in the distance appear blurry.

The condition occurs when your eyeball is longer, or your cornea is more curved than average. This means that when the light rays come together (focus), they do so in front of, rather than on, the retina. This means that the image becomes blurred. Laser eye surgery can correct myopia by changing the shape of the cornea. This matches the focusing power to the length of the eye.

Hyperopia *Long-Sightedness*

When you're long-sighted, you are able to see objects in the distance while close objects appear blurry.

The condition occurs when your eyeball is shorter, or your cornea is flatter than average. This means that light focuses behind the retina causing close vision to be blurry.

Younger hyperopic people sometimes have stronger focusing power. This means they can bring things into focus to compensate for the blurring. As the eye ages (presbyopia), their ability to self-focus gets weaker. Both distance and near vision become blurred. This means that people with hyperopia often need reading glasses before their 40s. They then need both reading and distance glasses (or bifocals) from their 40s or 50s onwards.

Astigmatism *Blurry Eyes*

Astigmatism is a type of refractive error.

It is caused by irregularities in the shape of a person's cornea. A normal eye is round like a soccer ball. Astigmatism occurs when your eye is more oval-shaped, like a rugby ball.

The abnormal curve of the cornea means that when light enters the eye, it is not focused on the retina. This results in an unclear or blurry image.

Approximately half of all people with myopia or hyperopia also have astigmatism.

Laser eye surgery can correct astigmatism, along with long-sightedness or short-sightedness, if necessary.

Presbyopia *Ageing Eyes*

Presbyopia is a condition that develops as we age.

It affects everyone during their lifetime. It often starts being noticeable around the age of 45 and affects most people by the time they reach the age of 50. As we age, the eye's natural lens stiffens and loses its ability to focus. This means you lose the ability to see things close up and become dependent on reading glasses. In some people, the stiffening of the lens (presbyopia) affects their distance vision and most find that they also need to wear glasses to correct it.

People use reading glasses, multifocal glasses or monovision contact lenses to correct presbyopia. Although, people looking for a more convenient solution can have laser vision correction to correct their vision such as Laser blended vision or RLE.

Cataract *Cloudy Eyes*

When your vision becomes blurry resulting in an inability to see clearly at any distance.

A cataract is the clouding of the lens of the eye which stops the light from reaching the retina. This can affect your vision, making it cloudy, blurry or misty.

The most common cause of cataracts is age. Certain medications and conditions like diabetes can also contribute and may cause blurriness at an earlier age.

Cataracts usually get worse over time. The only way to restore the vision is to remove them through cataract surgery. At Eye Institute, we offer cataract surgery. We also offer procedures that correct your prescription and enable you to see a range of distances without the need for glasses.

Please visit our website for more information on cataract surgery.

Limitations of glasses & contact lenses

There's no denying that glasses & contact lenses are incredible inventions. But, they are not without their limitations.

Living with glasses & contact lenses

While people with good natural vision can tackle their day without even considering their eyes, there are inconveniences glasses or contacts wearers may experience.

Whether it is needing to pack spare glasses, contacts and contact solution for a weekend away, having to put on their glasses to read a text message, or dealing with blurry vision when taking off their glasses to go for a swim or when playing sports.

For example:

- **Exercise:** Glasses can steam up, slip down or fall off during exercise.
- **Sports:** Having to consider taking off your glasses to a play sport where they might get knocked or fall off, or potentially risk losing a lens if wearing contacts.
- **Reading, writing and typing:** Headaches, eye strain, and even nausea can result from wearing reading glasses that are too far off from your actual prescription or when not wearing your glasses or lenses to read.
- **Driving:** Glasses can increase glare and restrict your peripheral vision while driving.
- **Cooking:** Glasses often steam up, and certain foods can irritate your eyes, if wearing contacts this could cause you to rub your eyes and risk dislodging a lens.

Vision correction

Free yourself from the hassle of glasses & contact lenses with vision correction.

Vision correction can include a variety of treatment options:

- Laser eye surgery procedures
- Laser eye surgery alternatives
- Treatment options for ageing eyes

Laser Eye Surgery procedures

There are 3 laser eye surgery treatments:

LASIK

Due to its success, LASIK continues to be one of the most performed elective surgeries in the world. LASIK is a 100% blade-free laser procedure. It can improve vision for people who have short-sightedness, long-sightedness and astigmatism.

SMILE ™

SMILE is the most significant advancement in laser eye surgery in the last decade. The procedure is 100% blade-free. It allows rapid recovery and visual freedom for people who have short-sightedness and astigmatism.

PRK

Suppose your eyes are not well suited to LASIK or SMILE laser eye surgery. In that case, PRK still allows you to experience the freedom of vision correction. PRK can improve vision for people who have short-sightedness, long-sightedness and astigmatism.

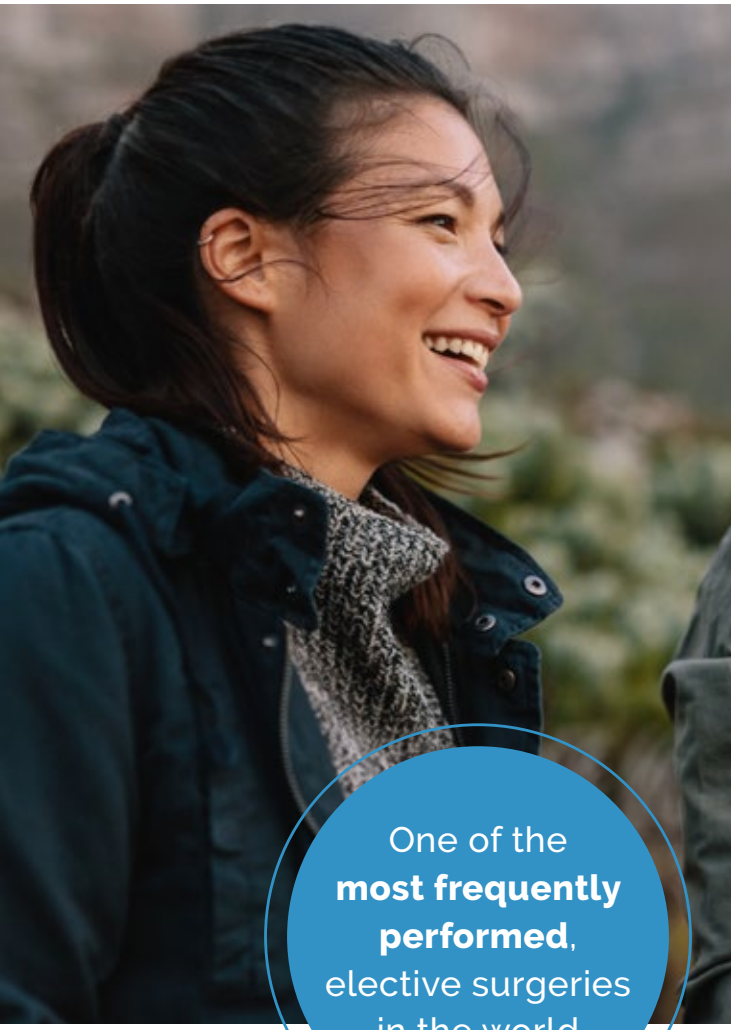
The type of laser eye treatment best suited for you depends on your eyes. Our surgeons and their teams offer a free suitability assessment where you will be advised of your best treatment options for your eyes. On the following pages we introduce the 3 laser eye surgery treatments, and Implantable Contact Lens Surgery for those who are not suitable for laser vision correction.

After a 40-year track record,
laser eye surgery is one of the most successful elective treatments in the world.

Over 50 million people
worldwide have had laser eye surgery and achieved independence from glasses and contact lenses since 1990.

How does it work?
Laser eye surgery is a form of refractive surgery that uses a laser to reshape your cornea. Adjusting the curvature of your cornea allows light to focus onto the retina at the back of the eye, creating a clear image.

Let us advise the best option for you



LASIK Laser Eye Surgery

- LASIK is a precision laser procedure which is 100% blade-free and can restore vision for people who suffer from myopia, hyperopia and astigmatism.
- The procedure takes 10-15 minutes and the recovery is extremely quick.
- Thanks to LASIK, over 40 million people worldwide are now experiencing life without glasses or contact lenses.
- Due to its success and ability to treat all refractive errors, it continues to be one of the most frequently performed elective surgeries in the world.

Are you suitable for LASIK?

You may be a suitable candidate for LASIK if:

- You're at least 18 years old.
- Your vision prescription has not changed significantly in the past year.
- You are generally healthy.
- You don't have an active eye infection or inflammation that could jeopardise the safety of the procedure.
- Your corneas are thick enough for us to create a corneal flap (we can only know that when we examine you).

How does LASIK work?

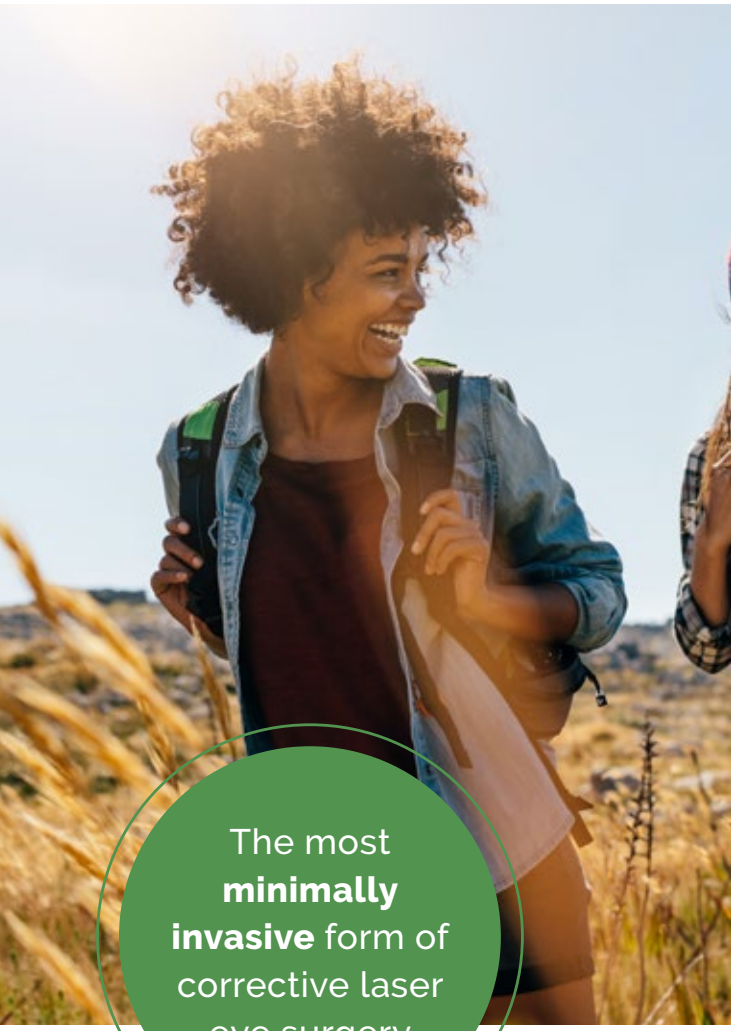
LASIK improves the focusing power of the eye to correct refractive errors. During the procedure, the surgeon guides a laser to reshape the cornea - the transparent covering of the eye. It is a two step procedure using two different laser technologies - one to create a flap, and one to reshape the cornea. This improves the way light travels through the eye and focuses on the retina. The result is clearer, crisper vision, without corrective eyewear.

The benefits of LASIK

- Maximum safety through intelligent eye-tracking.
- High-precision.
- Shorter healing process.
- Quick recovery.
- Fantastic clinical results.

The results: face the world without barriers

- You'll have the freedom from glasses and contact lenses that you've always wanted.
- You'll enjoy the confidence and convenience that your friends without glasses and contact lenses have always taken for granted.
- You'll get to enjoy all the little things that are so easy for everyone else such as, taking a shower without the blurriness; not needing to put in your contact lenses in the morning; exercising without worrying about your glasses and avoiding the daily risk of a contact lens infection.



SMILE™

SMILE™ stands for Small Incision Lenticule Extraction and is minimally invasive and the most recent advancement in laser eye surgery for the correction of myopia (short-sightedness), with or without astigmatism.

Are you suitable for SMILE™?

You may be suitable for SMILE™ if:

- You're at least 18 years old.
- Your vision prescription has not changed significantly in the past six months to a year.
- You are generally healthy.
- You don't have an active eye infection or inflammation that could jeopardise the safety of the procedure.
- A healthy eye and a cornea that is the correct shape and strength to withstand the effects of surgery.

How does SMILE™ work?

With SMILE™, a laser places a series of pulses within the cornea, forming bubbles less than 1/1000th the width of a human hair. These bubbles outline the tissue that needs removing and creates a tiny connecting tunnel through which we can extract it. Removing this tissue alters the shape of the cornea, correcting nearsightedness.

The benefits of SMILE™

SMILE™ is a minimally invasive procedure as, unlike LASIK, it does not require creating a flap in the cornea but still provides excellent unaided vision outcomes. It also reduces incidences of postoperative dry eye.

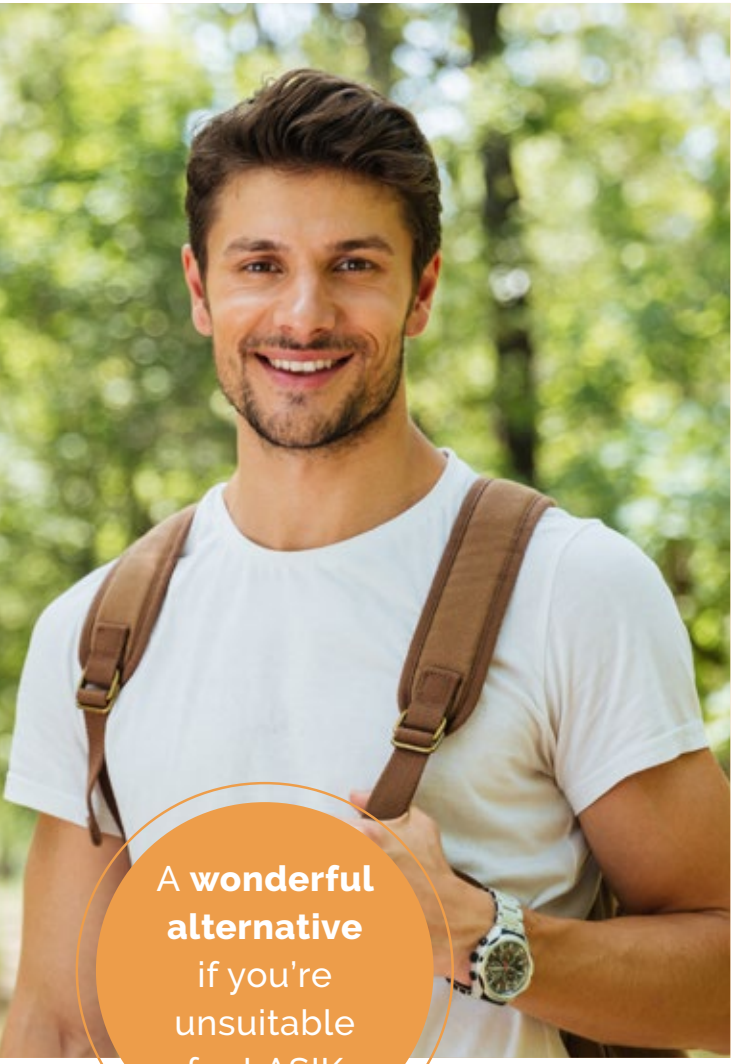
Is SMILE™ better than LASIK and PRK?

Not necessarily. There will always be a place for LASIK and PRK because not everyone will be suitable for SMILE™.

All three procedures achieve the same fantastic results, SMILE™ is just less invasive.

The results: face the world without barriers

- You'll have the freedom from glasses and contact lenses that you've always wanted.
- You'll enjoy the confidence and convenience that your friends without glasses and contact lenses have always taken for granted.
- You'll get to enjoy all the little things that are so easy for everyone else such as, taking a shower without the blurriness; not needing to put in your contact lenses in the morning; exercising without worrying about your glasses and avoiding the daily risk of a contact lens infection.



PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy)

- PRK is a laser procedure using only an excimer laser to reshape the cornea.
- Unlike LASIK where a flap is created, PRK instead gently removes the surface cells, exposing the layer underneath allowing this to be reshaped and corrected.
- If your eyes are not well suited to LASIK or SMILE™ due to thin corneas or previous refractive surgery, then PRK is the preferable option.
- This procedure allows you to still experience the freedom that comes with vision correction.

Are you suitable?

You may be a good candidate for PRK if:

- You're 18 years or older.
- You haven't experienced any significant changes in your vision prescription in the past six months to a year.
- You're in good health and do not have any serious eye conditions.
- Your corneas are too thin for LASIK or SMILE™, are unusually shaped, or you are prone to dry eye problems.

How does PRK work?

PRK is similar to LASIK in that it uses laser energy to reshape the cornea to treat refractive errors permanently. One key difference is that LASIK involves the creation of a corneal flap, and PRK does not. Before surgery, we will numb your eyes with drops, so you do not feel any pain during the procedure.

It takes longer to recover from PRK than LASIK because the surface cells of the cornea need to regenerate. Your vision should be good enough to resume work, driving and the rest of your normal activities within 7-10 days of surgery.

The results

See the beauty all around you

- You'll take advantage of high definition vision, free from glasses or contact lenses.
- You'll go about your daily life without the inconvenience of corrective eyewear.
- You'll enjoy the freedom to live life to the fullest.

Implantable Contact Lens Surgery (ICLs)

If you want clear vision without glasses and contacts but you are not suitable for laser vision correction, implantable contact lenses (ICLs) may be a good option for you.

Are you suitable for Implantable Contact Lens Surgery?

You may be a suitable candidate for vision correction with ICLs if:

- You are at least 20 years old.
- You want clear, crisp vision without glasses or removable contact lenses.
- You've had a stable prescription for at least one year before treatment.
- You don't meet the requirements for laser vision correction procedures because either your prescription is too high or your corneas are too thin.

How does Implantable Contact Lens Surgery work?

ICLs are clear lenses made of collamer (a collagen type material) implanted between the natural lens (the clear lens inside your eye) and the iris (the coloured part of the eye). They do not replace the eye's natural lens. As light passes through the ICL, it focuses light onto the retina at the back of the eye enabling you to see clearly.

The benefits of Implantable Contact Lens Surgery

The benefits of implantable contact lens surgery (ICLs) include:

- It can treat a wide prescription range.
- Achieves fantastic visual quality.
- It can also help people who may not be suitable for other types of vision correction treatment.

ICLs are not for everyone

In this case, refractive lens exchange (RLE) may be more advisable.

- Ideal age range for ICL is 20-mid 40s.
- Under the age of 18, your prescription and eyes are still changing.
- Over the age of 45, you will start to experience changes in near vision, and require reading glasses.

The results

- You will be able to see as clearly as you do while wearing contacts (or even more clearly).
- You won't have to worry about the maintenance and hassle of taking your contacts out and putting them back in.
- You won't be able to see or feel the lenses. You'll only notice your vision is clearer and sharper.

Following ICL implantation, annual check ups are recommended.

Ageing eyes

Rewind the clock on your eyes.

Ditch the hassle of reading glasses. If you don't feel like settling for deteriorating vision and prefer eyes that can keep up with your busy lifestyle, you should consider vision correction for ageing eyes.

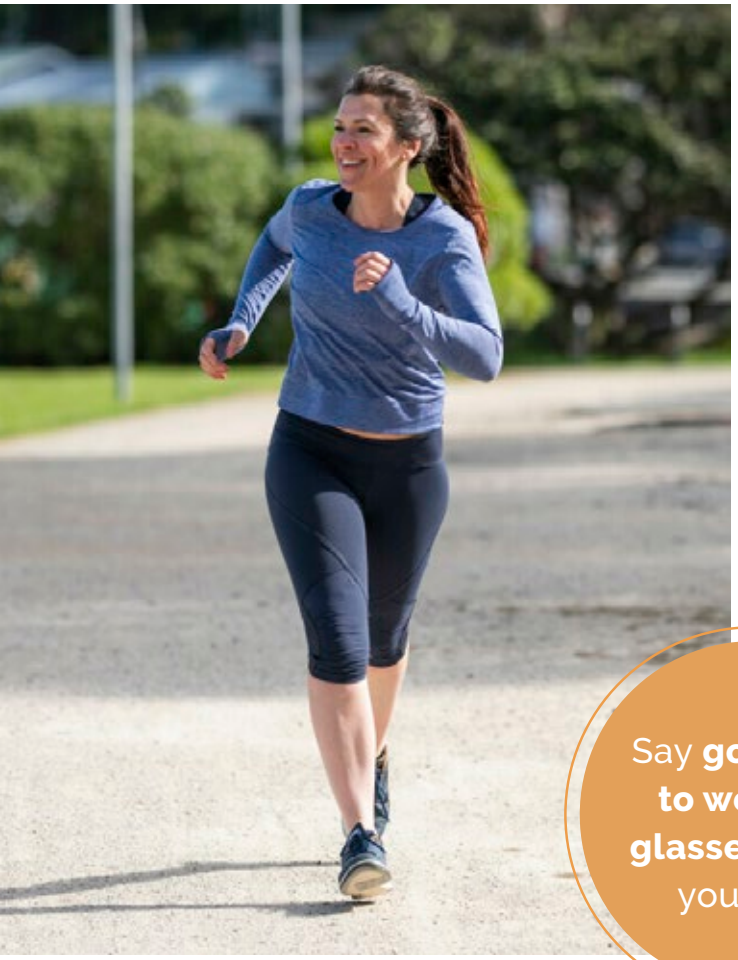
Presbyopia

Presbyopia is a part of the eye's natural ageing process that starts being noticeable at around 45 years of age and affects nearly everyone by the time they reach 50 years of age.

Uncorrected, your presbyopia can be bothersome. You might have difficulty reading small print, even with reading glasses on. You might experience fatigue from doing close work.

You may find you need brighter lighting when reading. You may need to hold screens at arm's length distance to focus properly on them.

Fortunately, glasses and contact lenses can correct presbyopia. Unfortunately, you may dislike the way your glasses look or feel. Furthermore, they may interfere with your ability to switch from distance to near vision tasks easily.



Say **good-bye to wearing glasses** whilst you read

Laser Blended Vision

- Are you over the age of 45?
- Have you begun noticing a change in your vision?
- Has your optometrist told you that you need to wear reading glasses or multifocal glasses or contact lenses?
- Perhaps you have good distance vision with visual aids, but now you're dependent on them to see up close too.

If the answer to these questions is yes, you could benefit from Laser Blended Vision.

Are you suitable for Laser Blended Vision?

You may be suitable for Laser Blended Vision if:

- You wear reading glasses.
- You wear progressive glasses or contact lenses.
- You already wear contact lenses with blended vision.
- You are frustrated with looking for your reading glasses.
- You are over experiencing problems achieving good vision for all tasks with your contact lenses or glasses.
- You are over 45.

How does Laser Blended Vision work?

Laser Blended Vision is similar to standard laser eye surgery. We use a laser to reshape your cornea – the transparent, curved window at the front of the eye. Adjusting the curvature of your cornea allows light to focus onto the retina at the back of the eye, creating a clear image.

The only difference with Laser Blended Vision is that we correct each eye for different distances.

The benefits of Laser Blended Vision

- Minimally invasive.
- Very short treatment time of a few minutes.
- Simultaneous correction of visual defects such as myopia, hyperopia or astigmatism.
- High patient satisfaction.
- Excellent clinical results.

Limitations of Laser Blended Vision

Laser Blended Vision helps to address the symptoms of ageing vision (presbyopia) but it is unable to reverse this process. This procedure is not suitable for everyone but for the right person it works very well and most people find that they can tolerate blended vision well.

Refractive Lens Exchange

What is Refractive Lens Exchange Surgery?

- Refractive lens exchange, or clear lens replacement, is a vision correction procedure.
- It helps people aged 50-plus to see clearly without glasses or contact lenses.
- It is becoming a very popular choice for age related vision changes.
- Refractive lens exchange could be the perfect solution for you if you are starting to experience changes in your vision due to the effects of ageing.

Are you suitable for Refractive Lens Exchange?

You may be a good candidate for refractive lens exchange if:

- You're over 50 and want spectacle-independent vision.
- You live an active lifestyle and find glasses frustrating for the things you love doing.
- You're not suitable for Laser Blended Vision.

How does Refractive Lens Exchange Surgery work?

The refractive lens exchange procedure is identical to cataract surgery but in the absence of cataract. We remove the natural lens and replace it with an advanced artificial lens to restore clear vision and sharp focus.

The benefits of Implantable Refractive Lens Exchange Surgery

The benefits of refractive lens exchange surgery include:

- It can correct a wide range of visual defocus errors. Including long-sightedness, short-sightedness, presbyopia and astigmatism.
- It eliminates the need for cataract surgery in later life.
- It is one of the safest surgical procedures you can have.
- Treatment is painless.
- Recovery is quick.

The limitations of Refractive Lens Exchange Surgery

The drawbacks of refractive lens exchange surgery include:

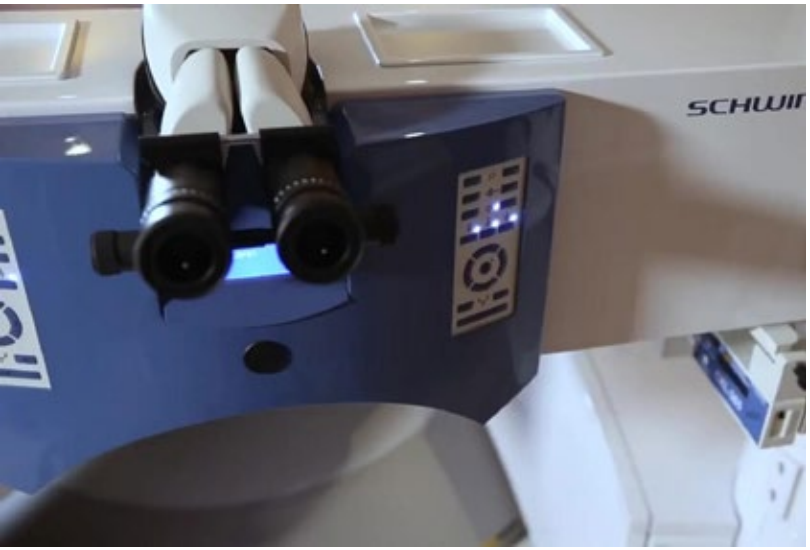
- Many patients experience glare and halos in the first few days to weeks after surgery, especially at night. These side-effects tend to fade away with time.
- The period of adaptation can take anything between 1 week to 3 months.
- 5% of patients may require fine tuning of their vision with a further laser treatment after the refractive lens exchange, to achieve maximum freedom from glasses.
- While the majority of our customers who have multifocal lens implants will not require glasses for most tasks, for very detailed work, or prolonged computer and reading work, occasionally use of glasses may be required.

After Refractive Lens Exchange Surgery:

- You'll see clearly and comfortably without glasses or contacts.
- If you do need glasses, it will likely only be for specifically visually-demanding tasks.
- You won't need cataract surgery later in life to remove and replace a cloudy lens.

The Technology

We use the most advanced technology available.



Our technology

Since introducing laser eye surgery to New Zealand in 1992, Eye Institute has continued to invest in bringing you some of the most advanced surgical and diagnostic vision correction equipment and treatment available. Below we introduce three of our systems used in vision correction here at Eye Institute.

Zeiss VisuMax® femtosecond laser

The Zeiss VisuMax® femtosecond laser is used in both SMILE™ and LASIK laser eye surgery and Laser blended vision. It's intuitive, minimally invasive & highly precise.

Schwind Amaris 1050 Excimer

The Schwind Amaris 1050 Excimer laser is one of the world's highest-performance eye laser systems which offers speed, precision, and safety for laser eye surgery. It is used in both LASIK and PRK.

Alcon CENTURION System

The Alcon CENTURION System is used in refractive lens exchange surgery. It uses high power ultrasound energy and mechanical oscillation to help break up the natural lens. After we remove the natural lens, we replace it with a folded intraocular lens (IOL) which we insert through the micro-incision.

Your treatment will be performed in a theatre environment, with fully trained specialist theatre staff, assuring the highest cleanliness and safety levels. We have also equipped our surgical suites with HEPA (High-Efficiency Particulate Air) filters, which safely remove more than 99.97% of airborne particles.

You're in safe hands

There's no question that vision correction is safe. Thousands of procedures are successfully carried out every day around the world.

We've got you covered

At Eye Institute, we provide the highest level of safety, precision and accuracy when it comes to treatment. We invest in the latest, advanced technology and we have an extremely experienced team who support our patients through every step of their journey.

Your treatment will be performed in a true theatre environment, with fully trained specialist theatre staff, assuring you of the highest levels of cleanliness and safety.

Our eye hospital is also equipped with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters, which can safely remove more than 99.97% of airborne particles.

Taking the first step

When it comes to vision correction surgery, the first thing to do first is to find out if you're suitable.

To book a **FREE vision correction assessment** contact our friendly team on **0800 99 2020** or book online.

What happens at a FREE suitability assessment?

Our vision correction suitability assessment is an obligation free first step to find out if your eyes are suitable for laser eye surgery or another vision correction procedure. If you have wondered about vision correction but aren't sure if it would be right for you, simply book in for a free assessment online or by calling 0800 99 2020.

At your assessment, we'll answer your questions and give you a clear and honest recommendation based on your eyes and lifestyle. You'll leave with a confident understanding of the best eye treatment option for your unique eyes.

Our team will:

- Discuss your motivations and vision goals for having vision correction
- Take all of the essential measurements and scans to determine your suitability for vision correction
- Discuss the best treatment options available to you based on your vision goals
- Provide you with future appointment availability if you wish to proceed, and the payment options available for laser vision correction. We do have interest free finance available and would be happy to talk you through payment options during your appointment if it is of interest.

So take the first step today, and find out if you could be free of glasses or contacts

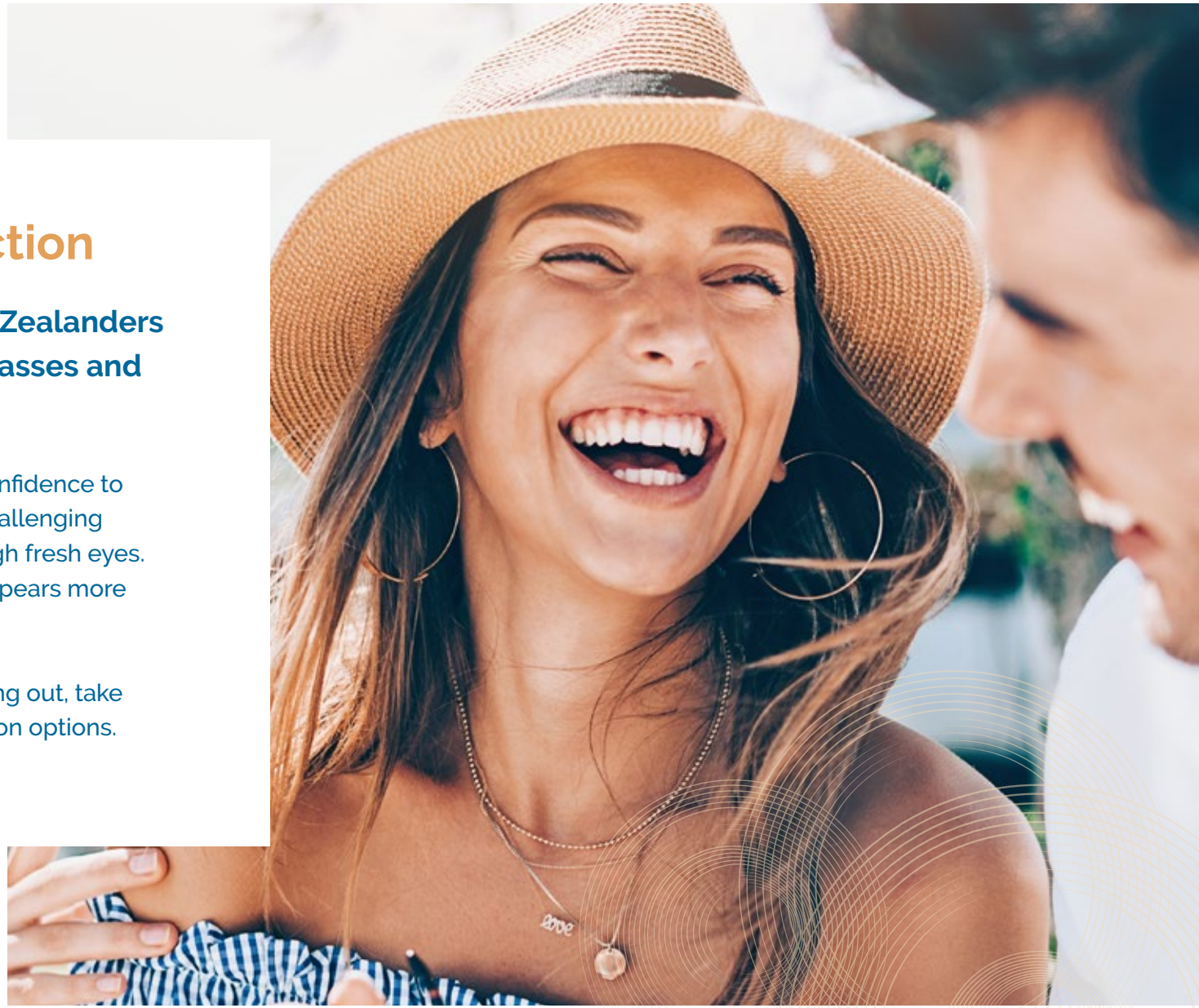
Please note the Free Vision Correction Assessment excludes cataracts.
Please contact our team for a more suitable appointment type if you have cataracts.

Life after vision correction

We've watched thousands of New Zealanders break free from the restraints of glasses and contact lenses, and you could too.

Vision correction surgery will give you the confidence to accomplish your goals and even set more challenging ones in the future. You'll see the world through fresh eyes. After vision correction surgery, everything appears more vibrant and visible.

So, if you're tired of feeling like you are missing out, take the first step and find out your vision correction options.



Paying for treatment

One of the big questions on the forefront of everyone's minds is 'how much does vision correction surgery cost?'.

Funding your treatment

The full costs of treatment for SMILE™, LASIK and PRK is $7,800 all inclusive for both eyes. The costs for our other treatment options can vary and will be discussed with you at the time of assessment.

You can also find out how we may be able to help you spread the cost of surgery, on the finance page of our website.

We offer interest-free finance options

- When you would love to experience the life changing freedom of vision correction surgery, you don't want to be restricted by the cost. Your eyes are irreplaceable, so it's important to be treated by experienced doctors, at a clinic that puts your vision and safety first.

  Convenient finance options are available to help you spread the cost of your eye procedure. Take advantage of long-term interest free finance with Gem Visa, so you can enjoy the benefits of vision correction at Eye Institute.

Does health insurance cover vision correction surgery?

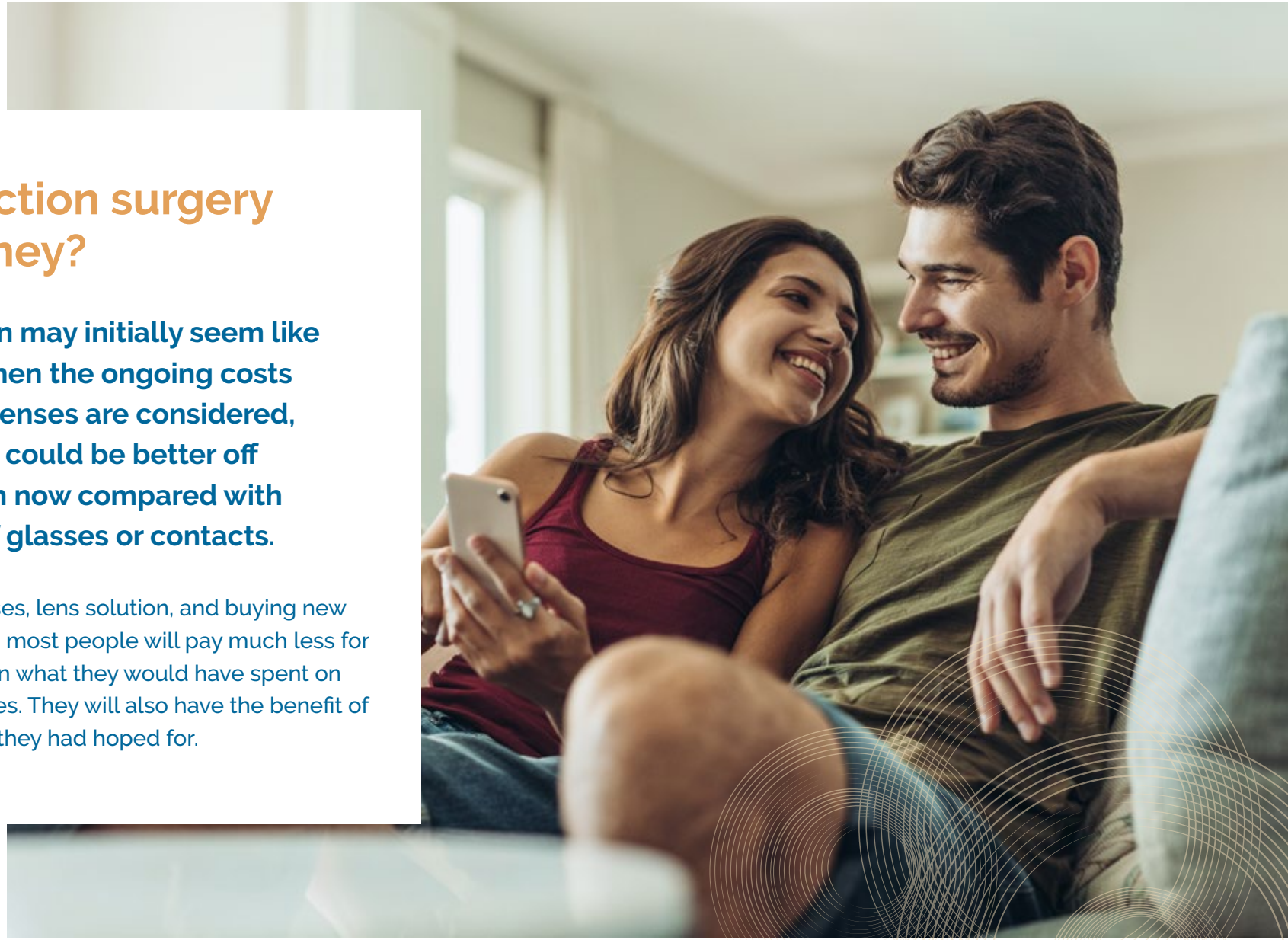
- As vision correction is an elective procedure, it is generally not covered by health insurance.

Stated prices are correct as of March 2025 and subject to change.
Please visit *www.eyeinstitute.co.nz/pricing-financing-page/ for current pricing*.

Is vision correction surgery worth the money?

While vision correction may initially seem like a large investment, when the ongoing costs of glasses or contact lenses are considered, you will likely find you could be better off investing in your vision now compared with the long term costs of glasses or contacts.

The cost of new contact lenses, lens solution, and buying new glasses, quickly adds up and most people will pay much less for vision correction surgery than what they would have spent on their glasses or contact lenses. They will also have the benefit of enjoying the visual freedom they had hoped for.



10 common myths & misconceptions

There are a lot of unreliable sources, myths & inaccuracies on the internet which could lead you down a path of fear & false beliefs.

Myth #1: The effects of laser eye surgery wear off

✓ The effects of laser eye surgery are permanent.

While the effects of laser eye surgery are permanent, as we get older, a natural ageing process called presbyopia affects the performance of the eyes. Fortunately, we have some fantastic procedures that can enhance both your distance and close vision. These procedures include laser blended vision and refractive lens exchange.

Myth #2: Laser vision correction surgery is still a relatively new procedure

✓ Modern day laser vision correction surgery techniques have been around for decades.

Over the last thirty years, millions of people around the world have undergone vision correction procedures. Developments in laser technology continue to refine this amazing procedure.

Myth #3: Laser vision correction surgery is painful

✓ Surgeons use anaesthetic eye drops to prevent any pain or discomfort during the procedure.

Laser vision correction is not painful. You may experience mild discomfort as you recover, but we have solutions to manage your pain.

Myth #4: Vision correction surgery does not correct long-sightedness

We can now correct long-sightedness in addition to short-sightedness with:

- LASIK
- PRK
- ICL
- Refractive lens exchange
- Laser blended vision

Myth #5: Vision correction surgery does not correct astigmatism

We can correct astigmatism with LASIK, SMILE, PRK and laser blended vision.

If laser eye surgery is not an option, we can correct astigmatism with lens implant surgeries. These include implantable contact lenses (ICLs) and refractive lens exchange, using an intraocular lens implant (IOL).

At Eye Institute, we offer several premium implantable lens options. Multifocal intraocular lenses and extended depth of focus lenses improve near, intermediate, and far-distance vision. Toric versions of these premium lenses can also be used to correct your astigmatism.

Myth #6: Laser vision correction can cause blindness

✓ **Risk and complications associated with vision correction surgery are rare.**

As much as any surgery does contain risk, laser eye surgery is one of the lowest risk elective procedures you could have.

Myth #7: Recovery from Laser Vision Correction takes a long time

✓ **You could be back at work or driving in as little as 1-2 days.**

We encourage you to resume your normal lifestyle as soon as you are comfortable, this often means you can be back to work or driving again in just 1-2 days.

Myth #8: If you blink or move during vision correction surgery, you could get injured

✓ **We use a special instrument to hold the lids open and prevent blinking during surgery.**

We also use lasers with advanced high-speed eye-tracking systems that track and adjust for small eye movements. On the rare occasion that a larger movement (or even a power outage) occurs, the laser stops and treatment will only resume once tracking has been re-established.

Myth #9: Laser eye surgery cannot correct a high prescription

✓ The technology laser eye surgery relies upon is continuously developing and expands the range of prescriptions that can be treated.

New procedures are less invasive, meaning we can now correct higher prescriptions than ever before. To be 100% certain that you are a suitable candidate, you would need to attend a suitability assessment

If you are over 50 years of age and have a glasses prescription higher than the normal range for laser eye surgery, you are likely to be suitable for refractive lens exchange.

Almost any level of myopia (short-sightedness) or hyperopia (long-sightedness) can be corrected by refractive lens exchange.

Myth #10: It's cheaper to stick with glasses & contact lenses than to have laser vision correction

✓ You could be better off investing in your vision now, compared with the long term cost of glasses or contacts.

The cost of new contact lenses, lens solution, and buying new glasses, quickly adds up and most people will pay much less for vision correction surgery than what they would have spent on their glasses or contact lenses long term.

Frequently asked questions

Begin surgery feeling informed, safe & comfortable.

Considering vision correction?

If you're thinking about having vision correction surgery you'll probably have lots of questions. Whether you'd like to know about the risks, what happens before, during and after surgery, or how long you can expect your recovery to take – our experienced teams are always happy to talk you through any questions. In the meantime here are the answers to some of the most commonly asked questions:

How much experience do your surgeons have?

Our teams have performed thousands of successful procedures since we first opened in 1995. Because our surgeons specialise in specific areas, you can be sure you'll be looked after by someone with excellent experience with your condition.

Can I choose my surgeon?

You are welcome to request a surgeon if you would like to see the same surgeon that treated a friend or family member. Please note, that as all of our surgeons are specialists in specific areas of eye care and surgery, your condition could dictate which surgeon you are seen by.

Which procedure will I be suitable for?

The vast majority of people seeking laser vision correction will most likely be suitable. The best way to determine which treatment is right for you is to visit us for an assessment. You will receive tailored advice on your best treatment options.

When is the best time to have vision correction?

One of the most common comments we get from patients after going through vision correction is, "Why didn't I do this earlier?" There has never been a better time to have vision correction surgery.

How much does eye surgery cost?

The full costs of treatment for SMILE™, LASIK and PRK is $7,800*, all inclusive for both eyes. The costs for our other treatment options can vary and will be discussed with you at the time of assessment.

Which locations can I go to for my surgery?

We offer laser vision correction at our Auckland Central (Remuera) and Wellington clinics. Our Remuera clinic is our central hub offering our full range of services and is where we can perform all vision correction treatments. However, many of our 'satellite' clinics are equipped to deal with most other procedures and treatments other than laser vision correction , as well as consultations and follow-up appointments. Have a look at where your local Eye Institute clinic is on our locations page, or simply ask us when you make an appointment.

Can a family member or friend accompany me?

You are welcome to bring a family member or friend with you when you come for surgery, and any other appointments as well. During surgery, they can wait for you in one of our comfortable lounges.

I have astigmatism, can I still have vision correction surgery?

Yes. Laser eye surgery, implantable contact lenses and refractive lens exchange procedures can all treat astigmatism at the same time as they correct short or long-sightedness. No extra procedure is needed.

Am I too old / too young?

Your suitability will be determined by the health of your eyes, your age, and the thickness of your cornea. For those experiencing age-related vision changes, laser eye surgery may no longer be suitable, but other vision correction procedures such as Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE) could be a great option. Our team will advise you of the ideal solution based on your eyes. The minimum age for vision correction is 18 years old, but as an indication; laser eye surgery (LASIK, SMILE and PRK) is ideally 20+ with a stable prescription, and Refractive Lens Exchange is often 50+.

What range of prescriptions can be treated?

Vision correction surgery can performed on patients with:

- Myopia up to -10.00 D
- Hyperopia up to +6.00 D
- Astigmatism up to -6.00 D

What if my prescription is too high?

Some prescriptions may fall outside of the criteria for performing laser eye surgery. However there may be other alternative treatment options available to you which can be discussed at the time of the assessment.

Stated prices are correct as of March 2025 and subject to change. Please visit *www.eyeinstitute.co.nz/pricing-financing-page/ for current pricing.*

Questions about procedures & risks

How long does vision correction surgery take?

Every procedure is different, but nearly all treatments are now 'day stay' procedures. Laser eye surgery and Implantable contact lens surgery are usually performed on both eyes and take about 15-20 minutes.

Refractive lens exchange surgery takes about 10-15 minutes per eye.

What are the risks of vision correction surgery?

With all surgical procedures, there is a possibility of complications. However, complications from eye surgery that could threaten your vision are very rare.

Generally, the most serious risk associated with eye surgery is infection, and this risk can be reduced substantially by following the advice of your surgeon after surgery. For example, it's really important to use any eye drops or medication you are given after surgery. You may also be advised to avoid swimming and exposure to potentially contaminated water such as hot tubs for a few weeks.

How should I prepare before surgery?

We perform our vision correction procedures under either a topical or local anaesthetic. That means no special preparation (such as not eating beforehand) is usually required and we advise that you take any medication you are prescribed as normal. However, your surgeon and their team will advise you at your consultation appointment if any special preparations are necessary.

What if I'm too nervous to go through with it?

It's natural to be nervous before undergoing any medical procedure. That's why our caring, friendly and experienced team is always on hand. Part of their job is to know how to make sure you feel relaxed and comfortable before, during and after your surgery. They are highly trained and will be able to answer all of your questions and concerns. They are capable of making even the most nervous patient feel completely at ease.

Will there be any pain?

The vast majority of procedures are now carried out under local or topical anaesthetic, so you will be awake, but your eye will be 'numb' to any pain. You may experience some slight pressure, but your surgeon will clearly explain to you exactly what to expect beforehand. You may also have the option of taking a mild sedative to help if you wish.

What will I feel during the vision correction procedure?

It is very unlikely that you would experience pain during vision correction surgery. We will give you a topical or local anaesthetic to numb your eyes. Most people report feeling some pressure on the eye (which can be a strange sensation) but not painful.

Is it possible to perform vision correction surgery on both eyes?

Yes. If you need vision correction surgery in both eyes, then it would be the normal practice to treat both eyes on the same day.

What happens if I look away, blink, cough or sneeze during the procedure?

With laser eye surgery, the laser tracks your eye hundreds of times every second and compensates for any movements.

We use a special instrument to hold the lids open and prevent blinking during surgery so that you cannot blink during your surgery.

Questions about what it's like after vision correction surgery & recovery

How long will my recovery take?

Because every procedure is different, and so is every person, recovery times vary. However, thanks to the highly advanced technology and techniques we use, most procedures now have vastly improved recovery times.

As a guide, we encourage you to get back to your normal lifestyle as soon as you are comfortable, and most people can be driving and back to work within 1-2 days.

What aftercare regime is provided for my treatment plan?

The number of aftercare appointments needed will depend on the type of procedure you have.

You will have a 1 day post op visit, and any required appointments will be advised based on treatment.

Can I drink alcohol after vision correction surgery?

Yes you can, it is fine to have a small amount, however we would recommend that you don't drink immediately after surgery if you have been given a sedative before your surgery, to help you relax as this could interact with alcohol.

What if I rub my eye after vision correction surgery?

After eye surgery you will go home with eye shields for the first night to protect your eyes.

After vision correction surgery, it is advised to not rub your eyes in the first few days after the procedure and to instead use lubricating eye drops. A small amount of accidental eye rubbing is unlikely to disturb the treatment.

What precautions should I take after surgery?

After vision correction surgery, it's important to reduce the risk of infection as much as possible. That usually means avoiding activities that can lead to sweat or water in your eyes such as high impact exercise, swimming, and exposure to potentially contaminated water such as hot tubs, for 2 weeks.

When will I start to see the results after vision correction?

You will see the results the next day once you have removed your protective eye shields. It may still be a bit foggy and hazy initially, however, the vision is expected to continue to improve over the following 2-4 weeks.

What will I feel after the vision correction procedure?

Following LASIK, SMILE™, ICL and refractive lens exchange surgeries, most patients do not experience any discomfort.

After PRK, the eyes take longer to heal. It is normal to experience some grittiness, light sensitivity, eye-watering and discomfort for the first 24-48 hours. We provide pain-relief medication to manage this.

Does everyone get presbyopia?

Yes. Presbyopia typically develops during your 40s. When presbyopia develops, most people begin to need glasses for reading, even if they have never worn glasses before. Those wearing glasses or contacts for distance will require additional glasses for close up and reading vision. This could mean changing to bifocal or progressive glasses or contact lenses.

Glossary

Glossary

A

Acuity
The sharpness or clarity of vision.
The most common measure of visual acuity is the Snellen acuity chart used by optometrists and ophthalmologists. Normal visual acuity is known as '20/20 vision'.

Astigmatism
A condition in which the cornea's surface is not spherical but shaped like a rugby ball. An astigmatic cornea focuses incoming images on two separate points in the eye, creating a distorted image. The second number on your glasses prescription refers to your degree of astigmatism.

B

Bifocals
Corrective lenses that have two powers of correction. Typically, most of the lens is used for distance vision, while a smaller area is for near vision. Bifocals and varifocals are normally prescribed for individuals with presbyopia (ageing eyes).

C

Cataract
Is the clouding of the natural lens inside the eye.

Cornea
The front clear window of the eye, also responsible for 2/3 of the eye's focusing power. Most laser eye surgery procedures work by changing the curvature of the cornea.

D

Dry Eye
The term 'dry eye' is used to describe a variety of disorders with similar symptoms: discomfort, a feeling of dryness, burning or stinging, grittiness, foreign body sensation and photophobia and sometimes even watering.

E

Enhancement
A secondary laser eye surgery treatment or retreatment performed to refine or improve the original visual result.

Epi-LASIK
See 'Laser-assisted subepithelial keratectomy'.

Epithelium
The outer surface layer of the cornea – the skin. Measurement of the epithelium's thickness is one of the most sensitive methods for detecting a condition called keratoconus.

Excimer Laser
An argon-fluoride laser that produces intense ultraviolet light in pulses. Excimer Laser technology is used to correct refractive errors of the eye.

F

Femtosecond Laser
A femtosecond laser is a laser that emits optical pulses. Femtosecond laser technology is used for the SMILE^{v} laser eye surgery procedure and creates a corneal flap in LASIK.

Focusing power
The cornea is responsible for about two-thirds of the focusing power of the eye. As light enters the eye, it is focused by the cornea. Then, as the light passes through the pupil, the lens adjusts the focus, depending on the distance of the object being viewed. Close objects, such as a book or computer screen, require more power than distant objects, such as traffic signs.

H

Halos
Images from light sources look blurred, with circles radiating outward from the centre. Halos can appear as a side-effect of refractive surgery, but they also occur naturally.

Hyperopia
Also known as farsightedness or long-sightedness. Hyperopia occurs when the eyeball is too short from front to back, or the focusing mechanism is too weak. This causes light rays to be focused behind, rather than on, the retina. People with hyperopia have difficulty seeing objects that are close by.

I

Intraocular
Inside the eye

Intraocular Lens
Silicone or acrylic plastic lens used to replace the natural crystalline lens of the eye.

Implantable Contact Lenses (ICLs)
ICLs, also called Implantable Collamer Lenses, are clear lenses implanted between the lens (the clear lens in your eye) and the iris (the coloured part of the eye). They are suitable for a wide variety of people, and usually selected by people with high myopia, hyperopia and/or astigmatism.

K

Keratectomy
Surgical removal of corneal tissue.

Keratoconus
A disorder that causes thinning and asymmetry of the cornea. The normally symmetrical shape of the cornea becomes distorted. A cone-shaped bulge develops, and this can result in significant visual impairment. Laser eye surgery is not recommended for people with keratoconus. These patients may consider cross-linking to strengthen the cornea.

L

Laser
LASER stands for Light Amplification by the Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Laser light is composed of one colour (wavelength), travelling in one direction, and each light wave is in step with the next. This makes laser light millions of times more powerful than ordinary daylight.

Laser Blended Vision
A laser eye surgery technique for the correction of presbyopia, in which one eye is treated to view objects mainly at a distance, but a little up close and the other is treated to view objects mainly up close, but a little at a distance. When both eyes are used together, the brain combines the images and the range of vision can be extended.

LASEK (Laser in-situ keratomileusis)
A surgical procedure to reshape the central cornea, decreasing or eliminating myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism. The surgeon creates a flap in the cornea, and the exposed eye surface below is reshaped using an excimer laser. After altering the corneal curvature, the flap is replaced. It adheres quickly, without stitches.

LASIK (Laser-assisted subepithelial keratectomy)
A surgical procedure to reshape the cornea by detaching the epithelium with an alcohol solution that softens it and allows it to be rolled back into a flap. After excimer ablation to correct the vision, the flap of epithelium is repositioned over the cornea.

Lens (also called crystalline lens)
The natural lens of the eye is located behind the iris. It helps rays of light to focus on the retina. The lens is transparent, but with age, it can become cloudy (this is known as a cataract). The lens can 'zoom' its focus from distance to near; however, this reduces with age (this is known as presbyopia).

Long-sightedness
See 'Hyperopia'.

M

Monovision (similar to blended vision)
A technique used as an option to overcome the effects of presbyopia. One eye is corrected for distance vision whilst the other is corrected for near. This can be achieved by using contact lenses or with vision correcting procedures, such as with a laser or intraocular surgery.

Myopia
Also known as near-sightedness or shortsightedness. Myopia occurs when the eyeball is too deep from front to back, or the eye's focusing mechanism is too strong. This causes light rays to be focused in front of, rather than on, the retina. People with myopia have difficulty seeing distant objects.

O

Ophthalmic
To do with the eye.

Ophthalmologist
A medical doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and medical or surgical treatment of eye diseases. Ophthalmologists have medical degrees and further specialist training.

Optometrist
An Optometrist is a primary eye health provider who specialises in the examination, diagnosis, treatment, management and prevention of diseases and disorders of the visual system. Many Optometrists dispense glasses and contact lenses. Therapeutic Optometrists can also prescribe eye related medications.

P

Peripheral vision
The ability to see objects and movement outside the direct line of vision.

Presbyopia
The gradual loss of your eye's ability to focus on nearby objects as you age.

PRK (Photorefractive keratectomy)
A surgical procedure using an excimer laser to reshape the cornea. This laser vision correction procedure is usually indicated when the cornea is too thin,for either LASIK or SMILE™.

Pupil
The small black circular space in the centre of the iris. The pupil changes its diameter in response to different light levels, becoming bigger in the dark and smaller in bright light. The pupil controls the amount of light reaching the retina and the depth of focus of the eye.

R

Refractive error
A measurement of visual imperfection. The degree to which images received by the eyes are not focused on the retina (causing myopia, hyperopia, presbyopia or astigmatism), measured in dioptres.

Refractive lens exchange
Also known as lens replacement, lensectomy or clear lens extraction. It is a vision correction procedure. It helps people 50-plus see clearly without glasses or contact lenses.

Refractive surgery
Any surgical procedure that alters the eye's focusing power (including, but not limited to, the laser eye surgery and intraocular procedures covered by the guide).

Retina
The light-sensitive layer of cells (rods and cones) on the eye's inner, back surface that converts light images into nerve impulses. These are then sent along the optic nerve for transmission to the brain.

Retreatment
See 'Enhancement'.

S

SMILE™
SMILE (small incision lenticule extraction) is an evolution of LASIK laser eye surgery, in which a tiny amount of corneal tissue is removed through a 'keyhole' incision – no flap is created.

V

Visual acuity
See 'Acuity'.

Visual field
The extent of an area seen by the eye in a given position of the gaze. The central visual field is directly in front of the object at which we are looking. The peripheral visual field is 'side vision'. The fields in each eye partly overlap.