

Start Smart: Researching LASIK Providers

See for Yourself | August 29, 2013

Since the procedure's inception, thousands of doctors have performed LASIK on millions of patients. The ubiquity of the Web and social media means that there's more information about laser vision correction available than ever before.

On the surface, this would seem to be a boon to those considering the procedure. However, if you're just starting to research LASIK, the sheer volume of information is daunting. This article offers guidance on where and how to begin your search, so you don't get overwhelmed.

Learn About the Procedure

Start your quest by learning as much as you can about laser vision correction from trusted sources. Look into the different types of LASIK, how they work, and the potential benefits and drawbacks of each. The more facts that you gather at this stage, the more informed and comfortable you'll feel later in your journey as you start to investigate sources that might not be as neutral. The following sites offer good overviews of the procedure:

Research Specific Providers

After you have an understanding of LASIK, move on to searching for information on specific providers in your area. There are surgeon locators and directories available, or you can do a Google search for "LASIK providers in [your town or city]." Depending on your location, you might find the names of nationwide LASIK companies, independent doctors or a mix of both. Visit the providers' websites and take note of which ones impress you. It might be a doctor with extensive experience and credentials, a LASIK company that offers the latest technology or some other factors. Take advantage of information kits or other supplemental information that providers offer. Based on what you gather during this phase of searching, you should be able to pick two or three providers to investigate further.

Get Personal

Thanks to social media, you no longer have to meet face-to-face to get word-of-mouth recommendations. Check to see if any of your prospective providers have Facebook or Twitter accounts. Compliments or complaints posted by patients can be quite revealing. Doctor review sites such as Healthgrades or Vitals can also contain useful information. However, it's important to take this information in context with your other research. As is often the case on the Web, the most passionate advocates and detractors are the loudest.

As with any medical procedure, you should research LASIK thoroughly before coming to a final decision. And the process should always include in-person consultations with the providers you're seriously considering.