

LASER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

AFTER THE PROCEDURE:

-Once your procedure is completed and you are released we suggest that you go directly home. The eye drops that numb your cornea will start to wear off about 30-45 minutes from the last instillation. You may start to experience discomfort at that time which is exacerbated by bright light or wind.

- **Expect that your vision may be unstable for the first week or two.** It may appear clear at times and blurry at others. It may vary from one eye to the other. This is normal and will begin to stabilize as your cornea heals.

- **You may experience excessive tearing, light sensitivity, and a burning sensation when you open your eyes. This is a normal post-operative experience with PRK.** This discomfort occurs in about half of our patients. We cannot predict if you will experience these symptoms. It depends on many factors, to include your threshold to pain, the environment you live and how your body responds to the laser treatment.

- **The best recommendation is that you sleep and rest your eyes for the first few days after your treatment.** A cool compress may offer some relief. On the other hand, you may not experience a lot of discomfort. If you wish to read, use a computer, or watch television it is okay but may result in your eyes becoming dry and more uncomfortable. Complete visual tasks in small doses. Don't over do it!

AFTER THE FIRST WEEK:

- Typically your vision will stabilize within one month but may take up to 3-5 months. Please realize that you are required to follow-up with a Laser Certified (by the military) Optometrist for your post-operative examinations at **1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 12 months.** You will be dilated for the 6 and 12 month visits to get an accurate refraction. **It is very important that you keep all of your appointments** as your vision is still stabilizing for months post-operatively. Although, you may be seeing perfectly, it is still necessary to keep your follow up exams to assure you do not develop a corneal problem and not realize.

It is imperative that you follow your doctor's directions on using the steroid eyedrops after your surgery. This has a significant impact on your visual outcome. DO NOT run out of this medication. Do NOT stop the medication without being instructed by your doctor. It needs to be tapered (gradually stopping the treatment and number of drops). You will be given written instructions by your doctor to follow. This taper depends on how you are healing.

-**You are being given one medical profile** that covers two areas. **First**, you are being placed on a **4T status because of the steroid eye drops.** This will automatically expire at 4 months from your date of surgery. If you are removed from the medication prior to this

date, you should be given a new profile removing you from 4T status, putting you back on World Wide Qualified status. **Second**, the profile allows you to wear **sunglasses in formation for 1 year from your date of surgery**. It is very important that you wear 100% UV protective sunglasses when outdoors for at least one year after your procedure to protect your eyes from ultraviolet light exposure.

-You are required to take a copy of your profile(s) to your Primary Care Manager (PCM) and your Mobility Office. (If you are stationed here at Andrews your should send the form to your profile monitors for processing) We suggest that you keep a copy for your records. We will put a copy into your outpatient records and one into your Laser Center records. **This profile DOES NOT prevent you from PCS'ing, going TDY, or cross-training. The 4T profile prevents you from being deployed to a location where you may be unable to receive appropriate and timely ophthalmic care while you are being treated with the steroid eye drops.**

-**We keep a database** on all of our patients into which we enter all your pre-operative and post-operative data. This important database is used both by our doctors to review their treatment plans and monitor their patient's visual outcomes and by Brooks AFB where the data is evaluated each month for effectiveness of the Air Force Laser Program. If you are not going to have your follow-up care here at Andrews AFB MGMC medical Center, your optometrist/ophthalmologist is required to FAX or Scan and e mail us your exam after each visit. We enter the monthly exam information on all of our patients into that database for every visit for the entire year you are followed. We file all the exams into your Laser Center Record.

-**Once you have completed your annual exam, we need to consolidate your Laser Center Record with your Outpatient Record.** If you are not stationed here at Andrews, please get in touch with us and let us know where to send your Laser Center Record contents for consolidation.

- We hope that you have a wonderful experience here at the Andrews AFB Warfighter Laser Refractive Center! We value any comments, suggestions, and/or kudos that you wish to share with us.

Laser Refractive Center Telephone

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