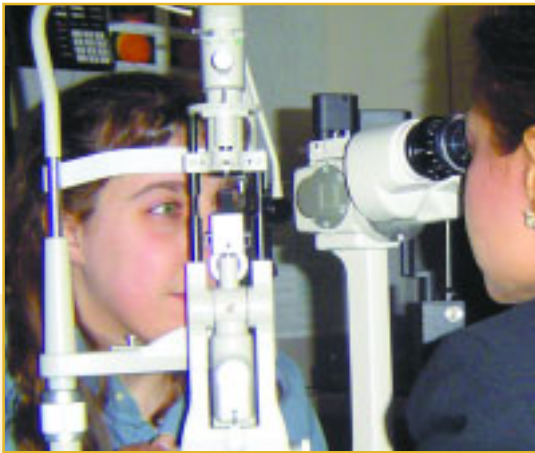


Seacoast Makeover



It's like watching a boxy, old-fashioned TV and upgrading to a state-of-the-art high definition plasma, the picture is so clear. Nowadays more and more people are taking advantage of breakthroughs in laser-assisted eye surgery to improve their vision.

"It's rewarding for me to restore a person's eyesight either by replacing their cataracts with state-of-the-art implants or utilizing LASIK for patients dependent on glasses or contact lenses."



Seacoast Makeover participant Beth Peterson has worn glasses since age 24, with eyesight of 20/80 and a diagnosis of myopia (nearsightedness). She has been curious about LASIK surgery for some time and the makeover team wanted to expose the beautiful blue eyes hiding behind Beth's gold-rimmed glasses.

Excellent Vision offers the most advanced, FDA-approved technology to help patients attain the best possible quality of vision. Dr. Lasonde customizes treatment to a person's individual needs, and performed Beth's LASIK surgery, sharpening her vision and freeing her beautiful blue eyes from the hassle of glasses.

THE FIRST VISIT

The consultation began with Anthony Duda, Refractive Surgery Coordinator, giving Beth a comprehensive overview of LASIK surgery, thoroughly explaining what to expect before, during and after, while answering all of Beth's questions and concerns.

LASIK (laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis) surgery was developed in 1990 by Dr. Lucio Buratto of Italy and Dr. Ioannis Pallikaris of Greece as a melding of two prior techniques; keratomileusis and refractive keratectomy. The procedure is intended to reduce or eliminate dependence on glasses or contact lenses.

A pre-screening was necessary to make sure Beth was a candidate for LASIK. Among a series of tests, Anthony uses a computer-controlled scanning device called a Wavescan to create a "map" of Beth's cornea to be used in surgery. Beth watched a 20-minute video so she fully understood the procedure, and when the results of the tests were reviewed, she was confirmed as an excellent candidate.



Richard J. Lasonde, M.D. is Chief Surgeon and Medical Director of Excellent Vision Eye & Laser Center (155 Griffin Road at the Harbor Health Building in Portsmouth). An ophthalmologist in practice for 12 years, Dr. Lasonde specializes in LASIK and "safe touch" cataract surgery. During the past year, Dr. Lasonde has introduced the new ReSTOR bifocal cataract implant to his patients. He has been very pleased with the dramatic results of this state-of-the-art implant which eliminates the need for reading glasses after cataract surgery.

The other doctors at Excellent Vision - Karen S. Nipper, M.D. (ophthalmologist and eye plastic surgeon), Dana F. Graichen, M.D. (retinal surgeon) and Naila Aslam, O.D. (optometrist) - bring a diverse range of specialties to the practice.

Dr. Lasonde, originally from western Massachusetts, said he chose this field to help people improve their vision.



Lasik Surgery

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Lasik Surgery

Dr. Lasonde used a special instrument called a microkeratome to make a fine incision through the top third of the cornea. This made a flap of clear tissue on the central part of the eye. The flap is approximately 160 microns thick (about 1/3 the thickness of a human hair). Once this flap was created, Dr. Lasonde removed the microkeratome and gently folded the flap back, exposing the underlying cornea, the area upon which the laser treatment is actually applied.



Prior to treatment, Dr. Lasonde carefully reviewed the detailed measurements and prepared an individualized treatment plan, from which the technician was able to accurately program the laser to achieve the desired correction of Beth's vision.

THE DAY OF SURGERY

The day of surgery was a little tense for Beth, but Dr. Lasonde eased her fears, calmly keeping her involved with each step of the procedure.

Beth was offered a mild sedative prior to the procedure. A member of the Excellent Vision team then escorted her into the surgical suite and invited her to relax in a reclining chair, where numbing drops were administered to her eyes. LASIK surgery took approximately seven minutes on each eye.

Soon the surgery was finished and Beth was in a recovery room being re-examined by Dr. Lasonde, who gave her the thumbs-up and thorough instructions for aftercare.

Later we asked Beth how the procedure felt. "I was a little nervous at first, but everyone at Excellent Vision was so professional and friendly. It made me feel comfortable throughout the process", Beth said. "Dr. Lasonde called me that night to make sure I was still doing well. I thought that was very nice. Also, it didn't hurt a bit. My sight is so much better than I imagined it would be so soon after the surgery. My follow-up exam the next morning revealed my vision is now 20/15, which is better than 20/20."

Most LASIK patients notice a dramatic improvement immediately after the procedure, though vision may still

"...My sight is better then I imagined it would be so soon after the surgery. My follow-up exam the next morning revealed my vision is now 20/15"

- Beth Peterson



fluctuate slightly for a time and may take up to three months to fully stabilize. Most people can return to work the next day, and patients can shower and bathe right away.

Beth tried on her glasses a week after the procedure and claimed they made her vision blurry, as she no longer needed them. Her eyes continue to improve each day, along with the rest of her new look. Thanks to Dr. Lasonde and the Excellent Vision team, Beth's blue eyes are no longer hidden and the future looks bright and clear.

For more information, visit their website:
www.excellentvision.com

Stay tuned for next week's makeover segments. Can Beth be transformed into a savvy shopper? How will she handle her first plunge into the unknown world of hair color?

We would like your feedback about the makeover. Please email advertorial writer dbreneman@seacoastonline.com



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