

HEALTH

COMMENTARY | Eye, Eye Doc

A permanent solution to astigmatism

By Dr. Rajesh Khanna
Special to the Acorn

In a previous article we discussed how astigmatism, an imperfection of the eye, can lead to eye strain, redness and headaches. For those under 45, Lasik is a good option. Here, I will cover the options available for people over 45. The good news is that astigmatism can now be permanently cured.

In this age group, the quality of tear film, the thickness of the cornea

and the presence of cataracts must first be determined.

If you have a cornea of normal thickness with good tear film and no cataracts, thin-flap Lasik can get rid of the astigmatism.

If you have dry eye or a thin cornea, Superlasik or Epilasik is a better choice, as there is no cutting into the cornea to make a flap.

If cataracts are present, treatment options include limbal relaxing incision, toric intraocular lenses, multifocal IOL or toric multifocal IOL.

Limbal relaxing incisions are derived from radial keratotomy techniques, in which cuts in the cornea are made. The number, length, depth and distance from the center of the cuts vary depending on the amount of astigmatism. Femtosecond lasers perform this function. These lasers are different than the one used for Lasik.

The fun part is that these lasers can also perform cataract surgery. They can make openings in the lens and chop it into small cubes. You can learn more about this in my book "The Miracle of Pi in Eye."

For details, visit www.Piineye.com.

The drawback of LRI is that it can treat only a small amount of astigmatism and the effect may fade away with time.

A permanent way to correct astigmatism is the use of toric implantable lenses. These are inserted when the cataracts are removed. They are of different powers and have to be accurately aligned for best results. If they rotate, the astigmatism correction can be affected. That is why the more stable tecnis and acrysof toric are popular.

The tecnis toric is white and allows maximum light to pass through. The yellow toric IOL absorbs blue light. In spite of toric lenses, a person would still need reading glasses. This problem has been solved by merging the benefits of accommodating lenses and toric lenses. The FDA-approved lens is Trulign Crystalens, which allows you to see sharply at all distances.

In the next article we will talk about multifocal toric lenses and treatment options available.

The Khanna Institute can be reached at (805) 230-2126.

Support for arthritis sufferers

The Conejo Valley Arthritis Support Group will meet from 12:15 to 2 p.m. Sat., Jan. 11 at the Goebel Adult Community Center, 1385 E. Janss Road, Thousand Oaks.

Vicki Wilson, a registered yoga instructor, will be the guest speaker.

The group meets the second Saturday of the month from September through June, and features speakers from the medical community discussing osteo and rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis and pharmaceutical developments.

For information, call (805) 493-5233. Membership is \$7.

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