

Community



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Shaping Clearer Vision Is Eye Surgery Right for You?

Your eyes let you picture the world. But, for many people, that image is blurry. If the shape of your eye makes it hard to see clearly, glasses and contact lenses can help bring the world into focus. For some, surgery may also be an option. But it's not for everyone. Researchers are looking for new ways to predict who will benefit from corrective eye surgeries.

Your eyes work like a camera, focusing light to capture images. The shape of your cornea, the transparent cover of the eye, is bent. This lets it focus light on the back of the eye to create a picture. The process of bending and focusing light is called refraction. If the shape of your cornea isn't perfect, it can't focus light properly, and you may have blurred or distorted vision. These are called refractive errors.

"Refractive errors are the number one cause of vision loss worldwide," says Dr. Anat Galor, an eye surgeon at the University of Miami. Refractive errors can make it hard to see objects either up close or far away, or sometimes both.

Eyeglasses or contact lenses are the most common ways to fix refractive errors. "Some people love glasses, but some don't," says Galor. "And not everyone is comfortable in contact lenses."

Some people's jobs or responsibilities make it difficult to rely on glasses or contacts for vision, explains Dr. William Dupps, an eye surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic. People looking for another option may consider refractive eye surgery.

The most common type of refractive surgery is called LASIK. Other methods include PRK and SMILE. These all use lasers to change the shape of the cornea. How and where the laser removes tissue differ slightly.

Other procedures work on the lens inside the eye rather than on the cornea. A surgeon can place an additional lens in front of the existing one, or remove and replace the existing lens.

To be a candidate for surgery, your refraction must be stable. That means the prescription in your glasses can't be changing over time. The shape of the eye also changes as you grow up. So refractive surgery isn't considered until you are at least 18 years old. Some health conditions and other eye problems also make refractive surgery unsafe (see the Wise Choices box).

Refractive eye surgery won't necessarily give you perfect vision, Dupps notes. "The most common scenario is that we get you to the level of vision you had in your glasses or contacts, but without the glasses or contacts."

Some side effects are normal after refractive eye surgery. These include dry eyes, pain, sensitivity to light, and blurry or double vision. These usually go away with time. Some people may need a second procedure to fix remaining blurriness, says Dupps.

Rarely, side effects can be permanent, or refractive surgery can make vision worse. Both Galor and Dupps are researching ways to predict who is likely to develop such effects, so they can avoid these procedures.

Galor and a colleague, Dr. Sue Aicher, are trying to find molecules in tears that could be measured to predict people at risk for dry eye or pain after surgery. Dupps is using imaging to find early changes in eye shape and strength that could make surgery risky.

If you're having trouble seeing clearly, talk with an eye doctor. They can check for refractive errors and other vision problems during a comprehensive eye exam. They can also refer you to a refractive surgery specialist.

Is Refractive Surgery Safe for Me?

Some things make it risky or impossible to have refractive eye surgery, including:

- Unstable refractive errors.
- Certain autoimmune diseases, like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis. These are conditions in which the body's disease defense system mistakenly attacks the body's own cells and tissues.
- Chronic illnesses that may slow wound healing, like diabetes.
- Use of medications that can prevent healing.
- Dry eye, glaucoma, cataracts, and some other eye problems.
- A cornea that is especially thin or oddly shaped. Certain conditions, like one called keratoconus, can cause these types of eye problems.

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Ways to Save Money This Year

(BPT) - Home and auto owners are aware of the financial responsibilities associated with each, but those looking to save money understand it goes beyond only reducing mortgage or auto payments. Regular preventative maintenance will keep your property in good condition while helping you save money in the long run.

"People often think about maintenance when something needs to be repaired, but the truth is that taking care of your property before it breaks might save you even more money," said Kevin Quinn, vice president of claims at Mercury Insurance. "Policyholders who take care of necessary tasks in order to maintain their personal property may help prevent major problems from happening later on."

There are routine measures you can take now that might help keep certain costs down when it comes to owning a home or vehicle.

One of the easiest ways to save money on auto expenses is to keep driving your vehicle for as long as possible. Most cars are built to last and the average age of a vehicle on the road today is at an all-time high of 12.3 years old. Keeping up with recommended maintenance such as regular tune-ups and repairs can save you from needing costly ones in the future, ultimately saving you more money.



Auto

Proper tire inflation. According to the Department of Energy, drivers can improve their fuel mileage up to 3% just by keeping their tires inflated to the proper pressure. The right amount of air contributes to increased gas mileage, a safer ride, and reduced tire wear. The appropriate tire pressure for your vehicle is usually found on a sticker inside the driver side door or within your car owner's manual.

Check your wheel alignment. Do not ignore the signs of a potential wheel alignment problem such as a vibrating steering wheel or a slight pull to one side when driving. Bad alignment can cost you by lowering your gas mileage or putting wear and tear on your tires which may necessitate replacing them sooner than normal.

Keep a maintenance log. Maintaining records of your vehicle's service history can protect its value. If you decide to sell or trade in your car, you can demonstrate its reliability and dependability with documentation. A well-maintained vehicle with proof of service may be worth even more money.



Home

Check your home's insulation. Opening up that first energy bill is often a surprise for new homeowners. Beyond trying to install energy-efficient appliances or lighting, new homeowners should check the adequacy of their insulation. Single-family homes, especially those built before 1960, may need an insulation refresh.

"Insulation is what helps keep your home warm in winter and cool in summer," said Bonnie Lee, Vice President of Property Claims at Mercury Insurance. "Well-insulated homes provide year-round comfort while reducing heating and air-conditioning bills."

Upgrade to smart home technology. A home equipped with a smart home system that monitors fire, water, and theft may qualify for a homeowners insurance discount.

"Many insurance companies offer discounts to homeowners who install smart-home devices because the technology is able to catch common problems early and can help prevent expensive claims," said Lee. "By using devices that monitor your home's safety and help with preventative maintenance, you may be able to save money on your insurance premiums over time."

Increase your deductible. A deductible is the amount you would have to pay out-of-pocket for damages before your insurance would kick in if you make a claim. If your budget allows you to pay a higher deductible in the event of loss or damage, your insurance premium will most likely go down.

Bundle your insurance. Bundling your auto coverage with homeowners insurance will qualify you for a multi-policy discount and save you money on your premium. It will also help streamline the process should you need to make a claim on both your home and auto at the same time. Contact your insurance agent to review bundling policies and rates.



Show Your Heart Some *Love*



Heart disease is a leading cause of death in the U.S. for both men and women. But you can take steps to protect your heart and stay healthy.

To start, you can learn and keep track of some important heart health numbers, like your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose (blood sugar). Then take action to improve your numbers.

One key number to know is your body mass index, or BMI. BMI is an estimate of body fat. Your BMI is based on your height and weight. Having a higher BMI is one factor that increases your risk for certain conditions, including heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Get your blood pressure checked at least once a year by a health care professional, and ask what your target numbers should be. Then ask for tips to keep your blood pressure under control. Keep track of your numbers.

Getting enough physical activity can help you meet your heart health goals. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week. Consider wearing a device that counts your steps to track how much you walk every day. Or simply jot down how much time you spend each day with different activities.

Eat a heart-healthy diet and keep a record of what you eat and drink each day. This can also help you stay on track.

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the benefits available to our
members!**

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members of USA Trucking Association will be held at 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri, on Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. for election of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof.

The above notice is given pursuant to the By-Laws of the Association.

PROXY
USA Trucking Association
May 18, 2023 Annual Meeting of Members
THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF
USA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION

The undersigned member of USA Trucking Association does hereby constitute and appoint the President of USA Trucking Association, the true and lawful attorney(s) of the undersigned with full power of substitution, to appear and act as the proxy or proxies of the undersigned at the Annual Meeting of the Members of USA Trucking Association and at any and all adjournments thereof, and to vote for and in the name, place and stead of the undersigned, as fully as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, as set forth below:

1. FOR [], or to [] WITHHOLD AUTHORITY to vote for, the following nominees for Board of Directors:
Tom McMahon, Tom Ebner, and Perry Turnbull
2. In their discretion, the proxies are authorized to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting.

This proxy, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner directed by the undersigned member. If no direction is made, this proxy will be voted for the election of directors and officers.

DATED: _____, 2023

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Please date and sign and return promptly to 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri 63131 whether or not you expect to attend this meeting. The Proxy is revocable and will not affect your right to vote in person in the event that you attend the meeting.

Chesterfield, Missouri
April 18, 2023
Date



Membership Services Office
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Suite 500A
St. Louis, MO 63131

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and association services, call or write:

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Articles in this newsletter are meant to be informative, enlightening, and helpful to you. While all information contained herein is meant to be completely factual, it is always subject to change. Articles are not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.