Las Vegas Eye Institute Discusses Laser vs Traditional Cataract Surgery in New Blog Post

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Las Vegas Eye Institute, based in Las Vegas, NV, has discussed laser cataract surgery vs traditional cataract surgery in a recent blog post. The article points out that the cataract surgery they provide is not laser surgery. However, they do provide laser assisted cataract surgery in which some of the steps are done with a femtosecond laser and the other steps are done manually. All cataract surgery is performed using a device known as a phacoemulsification handpiece through a minute incision. During the latter part of the procedure, a very small lens is folded and then implanted in the eye. It is the type of lens that is implanted that plays a key role in the visual outcome for the patient, whether or not laser assisted cataract surgery was performed.

It is important to note that traditional cataract surgery can be almost identical to laser cataract surgery, but in some situations, the femtosecond laser can offer a distinct advantage. In the traditional small incision cataract surgery, the surgeon performs the incisions with a metal or diamond blade. Some surgeons will use laser to perform these incisions. However, Dr. Swanic has discovered that manual incisions using a diamond blade tend to seal better compared to incisions created with the laser. Thus, he turns this feature off and performs a well-constructed beveled, self-sealing incision manually.

The femtosecond laser can also be used to create a perfectly sized and centered circular incision into the lens capsule. This is essential because an incorrectly sized and centered lens opening can cause problems later on, where the lens my decenter or tilt, resulting into reduced refractive outcomes. Meanwhile, Dr. Swanic is so skilled and experienced that he can surely perform the incision properly and and ensure that it is not decentered. As such, using a femtosecond laser does not actually enhance the visual results for the patient, and Dr. Swanic does not recommend it.

There is one possibility where laser assisted cataract surgery can have a significant advantage over traditional cataract surgery. The femtosecond laser can be used by the surgeon during cataract surgery to perform incisions in the cornea to reduce astigmatism. Dr. Swanic believes this is an excellent alternative for people with astigmatism under 1 diopter. For this, the Catalys femtosecond laser at Las Vegas Eye Institute has been integrated with their Cassini corneal topographer that measures the astigmatism of a patient. The Cassini captures a very detailed infrared image of the iris and the digital data is sent to the Catalys femtosecond laser. During the cataract surgery, the Catalys aligns the laser to the specific iris features of the patient to perfectly position the incisions designed to reduce corneal astigmatism. Unfortunately, this technology is expensive and is therefore rarely applied in most practices. Fortunately, Las Vegas Eye Institute is able to provide this precision laser assisted cataract surgery.

In general, laser assisted cataract surgery is better than traditional manual cataract surgery but the difference in results is small. Dr. Swanic would prefer to use the laser for practically all cases, except for the small pupil cases where surgical complications can occur. However, for some patients, the high costs of laser assisted cataract surgery don?t offer enough justification for using it.

Dr. Swanic says, ?Overall, whether or not cataract surgery is worth the money depends on your unique situation. The best way to find out if laser assisted cataract surgery is right for you is to see us for our thorough cataract consultation where all of these factors will be considered, and we will give you an honest opinion on whether or not the femtosecond laser is worth your hard earned money.?

Founded in 2013, Las Vegas Eye Institute is headed by its founder, Matthew Swanic, MD, who is a UCLA fellowship trained cornea and refractive surgeon with specialization in advanced LASIK and cataract surgery. He believes in laser vision correction so strongly that he had PRK done on his own eyes in 2010. He has obtained a certification on the advanced Visx iDesign 2.0 platform and can perform bladeless LASIK with the Carl Zeiss Visumax femtosecond laser. He employs multifocal and toric lenses of different designs to ensure a tailor-fitted solution for the patient?s eyes. He has also obtained a certification on the J&J Catalys laser that is used for femtosecond cataract surgery.

Those who are interested in learning more about laser cataract surgery can check out the Las Vegas Eye Institute website, or contact them on the telephone or through email.

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