REFLEX Refractive Lens Exchange

MULTIFOCAL INTRAOCULAR LENS IMPLANTATION "TRIFOCAL VISION WITHOUT EYEGLASSES"

"I'm 45 years old and I can't stand wearing any glasses, do you have a solution for me?" is a frequently asked question. The answer has been, "I can help you achieve good distance vision with LASIK but you will require reading glasses following the surgery. **That has all changed!** Refractive Lens Exchange or REFLEX is the answer.

In 2003, the FDA approved a number of intraocular lenses designed to help presbyopic patients become less dependent on bifocal eyeglasses. Unlike LASIK and other refractive surgery techniques that correct vision by changing the shape of the cornea, Refractive Lens Exchange corrects your vision by changing the focusing power of the eye's lens. This is done by replacing your natural lens with a new intraocular lens (IOL). This is essentially the same surgical technique that is used in cataract surgery but in this instance, there is no cataract. These lenses are surgically implanted in an operating room during a short procedure. The natural lens is removed and the artificial lens is introduced. With REFLEX you have the possibility of seeing both distance and near without eyeglasses.

Who are the best candidates for multifocal lens implants? The fundamental requirement is anyone who has a keen desire to reduce their dependency on bifocal glasses and has a healthy eye. Assuming that the individual is motivated, the very best candidate is one who is farsighted and presbyopic. Mild myopia and presbyopia, that is, someone who can take off their glasses and read well may not be satisfied with multifocal technology. Astigmatism along with myopia or hyperopia does not disqualify as the astigmatism can be corrected at the time of the lens implantation.

What are the currently available lenses? The first lenses to become available were the **Array Lens** and the **Crystalens**. The Array fell by the wayside as it caused too much glare although I have many happy patients with this lens. The Crystalens has gone through several upgrades to the present **Crystalens HD** which is quite popular and has its place in the right patient. The **Tecnis Lens** from Bausch and Lomb has emerged as the premier multifocal lens combining the best range of near vision along with glare-free distance vision. The **ReStor Lens** from Alcon Laboratories has also been very popular and it too has been enhanced over time to allow for the best working distance for near while providing excellent distance vision.

How do the multifocal lenses allow you to see distance and near? Don't think of these lenses as a bifocal glass lens where your eye must rotate up to see far and down to see near. The lenses have concentric areas, some of which focus distance objects on the retina and others focus near objects on your retina at the same time. If your brain wants to see far, it only recognizes the distant image and disregards the near. It is similar to sitting in a room where different people are having different conversations. Your brain can allow you to listen to each of the conversations separately without the other interfering. The switch from one to the other is instantaneous.

Are there differences in the lenses? A year ago I would have said that there were major differences but with time the manufacturers have been striving for the same end-

point and have come close to achieving their goal. The optimum end point is glare-free vision at distance and near with a good range of vision at near. That is, an ability to work at the computer and sew without glasses. The **Crystalens HD** probably provides the best distance vision but is least effective at near. The **Tecnis Lens** provides a nice depth of field for near work at the computer and book reading along with glare-free distance vision. **ReStor** lenses induce a little glare at distance but give a nice range of vision at near. The degree of glare does not bother most people and over the period of several months it is unnoticeable.

What is your lens preference? Dr. Gelber's lens preference is the lens which best satisfies the visual needs of the individual. He has come to understand the nuances of each of the lenses and can offer the best match for you. In some instances a ReStor lens in one eye and a ReZoom lens in the other will deliver the best of both worlds. He has learned about the importance of the preoperative evaluation, implant power calculations and proper patient selection; all are essential for a good outcome. Having performed more than 15,000 cataract surgeries, the surgical technique does not pose any unusual problems. It all comes down to experience, sound clinical judgment and surgical expertise. If you are considering this surgery contact the office and we can personally discuss the options.