Forbes.com September 2007

City Residents Can Benefit from Same LASIK Technologies Approved by NASA

San Francisco residents considering vision correction have another reason to be confident in LASIK, now that the National Aeronautics and Space agency (NASA) has approved the new advanced, all-laser LASIK technologies for use on U.S. astronauts.

The recent NASA decision was made following review of extensive military clinical data using advanced wavefront technology with the IntraLase method, which showed the combination of technologies provides superior safety and vision.

“Even your most extreme lifestyle is nothing compared to being ejected from an F16 or the G-forces of atmospheric blastoff”, said Dr. Ella Faktorovich, director of refractive surgery at Pacific Vision Institute in San Francisco. “With today’s advanced LASIK technologies, which feature the use of two lasers, instead of one as with earlier forms of the procedure, patients can be confident that they will have improved vision, but also that the procedure has proven to be extremely safe as well.”

Approved for use on consumers a decade ago, more that 11 million LASIK procedures have been performed to-date, making it the most common elective surgical procedure in the U.S. But it wasn’t until LASIK developed the all-laser procedure that NASA approved it for use on pilots, mission and payload specialists who face extreme, physically demanding conditions in space.

The all-laser LASIK technologies, which utilize wavefront guided and femtosecond lasers, have also been cleared for U.S. military personnel, including most recently Air Force pilots. Pacific Vision Institute has offered the highly advanced combination of LASIK technologies to its patients for more than 10 years.

LASIK’S FINAL FRONTIER

Concerns about the harsh aviation environment prevented the earlier forms of LASIK from use in the military and NASA. To date, aeromedical professionals have been cautious of employing the procedure on military aviators who frequently encounter environmental extremes such as high altitude, dry air, wind blast and “G” Forces. In space these and other conditions add even higher levels of concern due to the extreme precision needed during flight and space walks.