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The Latest Advances in LASIK Eye Surgery Make Superhuman Vision Possible

Since he was young, Kevin Gil could not see clearly without corrective eye wear. “I could barely read a foot past my nose and it was inconceivable to leave the house without contacts or glasses, let alone go on patrol,” says the 33-year old SFPD officer. Kevin described an incident where contact lenses became a liability to completing a task safely, “I was guarding a prisoner at the General and my contacts dried out. I had to ask a nurse for a tube of saline solution because I could not leave to get drops since I was by myself.”

It was a chance 585 during a Vision Zero LIDAR operation that led Kevin to ask his optometrist about LASIK, who recommend he see Dr. Ella Faktorovich, Director of Refractive Surgery at Pacific Vision Institute in San Francisco. What Kevin soon discovered, was Dr. Faktorovich and her team had been working with the SFPOA members for over twenty years—working to correct the vision of the SFPOA community of officers and their family.

In February of this year, Dr. Faktorovich performed LASIK on Kevin, using Contoura Vision LASIK, the most recent advancement in LASIK eye surgery. “Kevin’s timing was really good,” said Dr. Faktorovich, “as Pacific Vision Institute recently became the first clinic in San Francisco to offer Contoura Vision, the latest FDA approved LASIK technology available in the U.S. for laser vision correction.”

Since LASIK was first approved by the FDA nearly 25 years ago, surgeons and scientists focused on treating large imperfections in vision—nearsightedness (myopia), astigmatism, and farsightedness

(hyperopia). The goal was 20/20 vision without glasses or contacts. Once that goal was accomplished, attention turned to improving the quality of vision under challenging conditions, like at night or in foggy or misty weather. It turned out that the quality of vision in challenging environmental conditions had to do with smaller imperfections in vision, called higher order aberrations, which required an approach that was individualized. This custom approach, known as Wavefront LASIK, resulted in mapping technology that could guide the laser treatment along specific data points.

Contoura Vision improves upon the traditional Wavefront LASIK procedure by using today’s most advanced mapping technology to map the unique contours of the surface of each patient’s cornea (the clear window of the eye where most vision imperfections are located). The scanning procedure samples up to 22,000 elevation points on each eye to create a unique vision profile scan for each eye of each patient. In contrast, the older, Wavefront LASIK technology, maps only 1,200 points. “Contoura Vision is seen as one of the most significant advancements in laser vision correction, resulting in an unprecedented number of patients seeing 20/15 or better—which is 5 or more feet further than a normal-sighted person with a 20/20 vision,” says Dr. Faktorovich.

“I have 20/15 vision now and I could not be happier—I can read license plates with ease, and my last rifle qual was some of the best shooting of my life,” says Kevin, now seeing better than he did with even his best glasses prescription.

Who is eligible for LASIK vision correction?

On July 30th, Pacific Vision Institute will be conducting FREE LASIK screening at SFPOA to determine eligibility for laser vision correction. As with all laser



vision correction procedures, a thorough evaluation from an expert LASIK staff member is needed to determine candidacy for LASIK. Specific screening will be done for Contoura Vision LASIK, FDA approved for patients with myopia up to -9.0 diopters and who may have astigmatism up to 3.0 diopters. There are additional eligibility requirements, including adequate corneal thickness, normal corneal topography scans and other advanced measurements. The FREE LASIK screening location is the POA Building, 3rd Floor, from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. No appointments are required, this is a drop in clinic.