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In the last few years, extraordinary developments have occurred in the world of ophthalmology. New techniques in the field of cataract and refractive surgery are exciting for both the medical professional and the patient. With recent technological advancements, there are a host of innovations and newly approved procedures.

More than eleven million people have undergone LASIK, which has become even safer and more precise with the advent of the femtosecond laser (used to create the corneal flap) in an all-laser "bladeless" experience. However, laser vision-correction is not "one size fits all" anymore.

The much-anticipated FDA-approved alternative to laser refractive surgery is now available in the form of the implantable contact lens (ICL). Similar to a standard contact lens, the ICL can correct moderate to high levels of myopia or nearsightedness. Instead of sitting on the surface of the eye as does a typical contact lens, the ICL is delicately placed inside the eye. It provides exceptional visual clarity and is maintenance-free.

Significant improvements have been made in the field of intraocular lenses (IOLs) used in cataract and refractive lens exchange surgeries. Aside from the standard single-focus lenses, wavefront optimized versions and astigmatism correcting IOLs now provide the highest possible quality of vision after surgery.

Perhaps the most exciting advancement in the IOL field has been the presbyopia-correcting lens. For the first time, lenses are available that have built-in "zoom"—providing simultaneous distance, intermediate and, most of the time, near-vision correction without the need for glasses.

Three FDA-approved lenses, ReZoom (AMO), ReSTOR (Alcon), and Crystalens (Eyeonics), now provide a remarkable solution to the presbyopia riddle and an opportunity for millions of baby boomers to get rid of their bifocals and reading glasses forever. For more information, call (415) 922-9500.