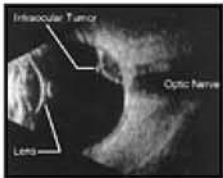


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Study: LASIK Surpasses Contact Lens In Overall Long-Term Safety

10/17/2006

Dr. Joseph Dello Russo announced the results of a study that indicates for the first time that LASIK is safer than contact lenses. According to a study published in the Archives of Ophthalmology, October 2006 edition, researchers have confirmed that LASIK surgery as performed this year is safer than contact lens use. Sight threatening infections from contact lens use occur in 1 in 2,000 contact lens wearers, whereas the study confirms that only one in 10,000 patients risk significant vision loss due to complications from LASIK, making LASIK the safest elective procedure being performed today.

Dr. Joseph Dello Russo, a pioneer in laser vision who introduced laser vision correction to the area as one of the ten FDA test sites in 1990, has been convinced of this for some time. The risk of laser vision correction has been diminishing as technologies continue to evolve. In 2003, Dr. Jeffrey Dello Russo introduced Custom Cornea LASIK, which in addition to improving vision, proved to eliminate night glare, one of the early common complaints of LASIK patients.

All eye doctors are aware of the potential dangers of contact lens infections. Tens of millions of Americans may be at risk of these serious infections for which there is no prevention. Basically everyone wearing lenses is at risk.

"Patients must remember that contact lenses are a medical devise and that you are placing a foreign body in your eye running the risk of an unpreventable infection," says Dr. Norman Saffra of Maimonides Hospital. A Lancet study showed that people who wear daily contact lenses run the risk of 1 in 100 of developing a bacterial keretitis, an infection that can lead to a loss of vision. Patients who abuse contacts by wearing them overnight or improperly caring for their lenses have an even larger risk.

"One shouldn't assume that lenses are safe," explains Dr. Dello Russo. "It may have been true years back but not anymore, since wearers of lenses are prone to serious infections. 1/2,000 will at least lose some vision or worse." Infections have become a serious threat to 30 million wearers who may not take good care of their contact lenses as well as episodic occurrence of epidemics of untreatable infections.

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According to statistics from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) from 5 years ago severe outbreaks of untreatable infections by a bug known as Acanthameba were observed in the US population. Many eyes needed to be removed. The CDC has this year reported another epidemic of an untreatable Fusarium germ with similar sight loss.

Lenses were harmless at one time but now can lead to serious loss of sight. Meanwhile conversely LASIK which years ago did have risks has gone through diligent work by doctors as well industry leaders, which has lowered the risk and rendered LASIK safe as compared to lenses.

Today, LASIK as practiced by experienced surgeons on properly selected patients is safer than wearing contact lenses. Surgeons who use the safest and most advanced lasers and who utilize the sophisticated screening technologies provide an unprecedented level of safety, said Drs. Joseph and Jeffrey Dello Russo. "The widely held belief that contact lenses are safer has been challenged," announced Dr. Walter Mathers, one of the study's researchers. Lens wearers are more likely to develop complications that lead to loss of vision than patients who underwent LASIK in 2006.

Recently, a large study of more than 32,000 U.S. Armed forces members who had an eye laser surgery found no vision loss greater than two lines in 18,000 procedures performed over ten years.

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