

For use in consultation with your surgeon

Refractive Surgery Checklist for Patients



The ROYAL COLLEGE of
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Think carefully before having refractive surgery. Take this checklist to your consultation with your refractive surgeon performing the procedure. Discuss each item with your surgeon to help you make the decision that is right for you before having refractive surgery.

✓ Your surgeon and clinic

Meet the eye surgeon who will be performing your procedure

We strongly advise that you choose a surgeon who is on the General Medical Council's specialist register in ophthalmology or has the Cert LRS qualification. You can search the specialist register via the GMC website <http://www.gmc-uk.org/index.asp>. Information on the CertLRS is available on The Royal College of Ophthalmologists' website <https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/examinations/certificate-in-laser-refractive-surgery/>

Your surgeon should be fully insured to carry out the relevant procedure in the UK. You can ask to see details of your surgeon's insurance.

Make sure the hospital or clinic is regulated with the relevant regulator.

England: [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#). You can search for a CQC-registered hospital or clinic and find out about the quality of their service through the [CQC website](#).

Northern Ireland: [Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority](#)

Scotland: [Healthcare Improvement Scotland](#)

Wales: [Healthcare Inspectorate Wales](#)

✓ Your costs

Get information on all the planned and possible costs

The cost of your surgery will depend on the type of procedure you have agreed with your surgeon. You should find out ALL the costs involved and what your rights are to refunds/return of deposits if you change your mind after you have paid some or all of the costs. Although a fee may be charged for your initial

consultation, check if the deposit for surgery is fully refundable within a reasonable time period if you choose not to proceed. Your procedure fee will normally include follow up clinic visits and treatment for any problems resulting from surgery. Ask how long after the surgery you are covered for free additional treatment.

✓ Your treatment options

Tell the eye surgeon performing the procedure what you want to change about your vision and why

Let them know what you would consider to be a successful outcome. Discuss the possible benefits and risks of all treatment options and find out if the surgeon can give you the results you want.

After reviewing your test results and examining your eyes, the operating surgeon should advise you in person about the best procedure choice for you and take your consent.

✓ Your procedure

Find out what the procedure will involve, the likely results, when you will see them and how long they will last

Will surgery need to be repeated in the future? Where and when will the procedure take place and how

long will it take? Ask your surgeon what kind of activities might still require use of glasses after surgery.

✓ Possible risks and complications of your procedure

Like any surgical procedure there are risks as well as benefits to consider

Find out what could go wrong with the procedure you want, how likely is it to happen and what can be done to correct it. Ask your surgeon what the most common complications have been in their experience

for this procedure, how often these have occurred and what the surgeon did to correct them. Consider how you would cope if anything went wrong.

✓ Your aftercare

Find out what to expect after the surgery including recovery time, how long any pain is likely to last and what you will and will not be able to do after surgery

Find out what follow-up care will be needed after the surgery. Who will do it and where will it be done. Ask what your aftercare package will and will not cover, how you will be looked after and by whom, and how long the surgeon and hospital or clinic will continue to support you.

What will happen if something does not go to plan and who will pay? What will happen if something goes wrong immediately afterwards or if you are not happy with your outcome? Is there immediate access to care? The NHS is unlikely to help you, unless you have a serious complication which needs emergency or life-saving treatment.

! Remember:

Before you have surgery, make sure you have the contact details of a named doctor who can deal with any problems after the procedure.

- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Never feel rushed or pressured into giving your consent to have surgery by special offers that are for a limited time only or any discounts in price eg two-for-one deals
- Only the operating surgeon should advise you about the procedure choice and take your consent for surgery
- You can change your mind at any point and you can ask for a second opinion from another surgeon

Take at least a week after your consultation with the surgeon performing the procedure to think things through before surgery