

What's the difference between LASIK and PRK?

You may have heard of LASIK and PRK from friends, co-workers or family members, but you might not know the differences between the two.

- Both LASIK and PRK are refractive procedures that can **enhance vision** and **correct poor eyesight**.
- Both LASIK and PRK are outpatient procedures that can usually be completed in **under 15 minutes**.
- The basic difference between LASIK and PRK is that LASIK correction is performed **under** a corneal flap, while PRK surgery is performed **on the surface** of the cornea.

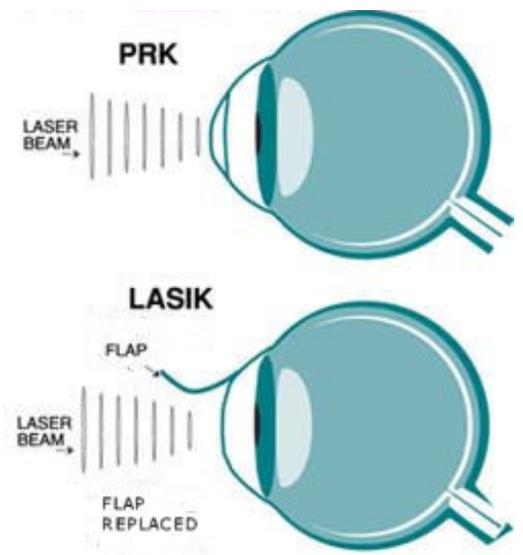
At 5th Avenue Eye Center, your eye health is our #1 priority. Dr. Ilan Cohen is a cornea and refractive surgery specialist, so we specialize in all of the vision correction procedures – LASIK and PRK, LASEK, epi-LASIK, Custom Wavefront LASIK and more. We want you to have a lot of choices when it comes to your vision. With so many options available, we can tailor your vision correction surgery to your unique eyes and make sure you get the best possible results!

The Two Procedures

PRK (*Photorefractive Keratectomy*) reshapes the surface of the cornea without cutting a flap. In PRK surgery, on average, less than 10% of the cornea is affected and the deeper layers of the cornea remain intact. PRK is more “cornea friendly” because it preserves significantly more corneal tissue.

LASIK (*Laser In Situ Keratomileusis*), on the other hand, uses either a blade called a microkeratome or an excimer laser to cut a flap into the cornea. From there, the laser sends pulses into the cornea to reshape it to correct vision conditions like myopia and astigmatism, and then the flap is put back in place. The LASIK procedure preserves the cells on the surface of the cornea, called epithelial cells.

[Is Blade or Bladeless LASIK better?](#)



Is There a Difference in Healing?

After LASIK, the corneal flap is placed back into its original position. Your eye has natural suction that allows the flap to stay in place to heal. In PRK there is no flap and the healing occurs on the corneal surface. Healing times vary per person, but typically:

- Healing of the LASIK flap closure takes about 1 to 3 days. The day after surgery you should experience significantly improved vision, with continued improvement over the next few days.

- PRK takes an average of 3 to 7 days for your vision to improve and anywhere from 1 to 4 weeks to reach its maximum sharpness.

[LASIK and PRK results & side effects](#)

Are LASIK and PRK Painful?

In the case of LASIK surgery, most patients are surprised at how easy and painless it is. Before surgery, Dr. Ilan Cohen will numb your eyes with anesthetic eye drops and you will feel nothing at all. Some patients may feel some pressure or discomfort from the tool that holds your eye open, but there is never any pain. In the hours after surgery, you can alleviate any minor irritation with artificial tears and a good night's sleep.

Traditionally, there is more post-op discomfort possible with PRK surgery, because the epithelial cells have been removed and must regrow (takes 3 to 7 days on average). Every person is different though, and some PRK patients have little to no discomfort.

Which Procedure is Right For Me?

LASIK, the more popular choice, is generally ideal for patients who have thick corneas and require faster results. But PRK is undoubtedly safer for other people, including those with thin corneal tissue, flat corneas, corneal irregularities or scars. Dr. Cohen will work with you to decide which option is best suited for your eyes.

[What about LASEK?](#)

[What is Custom LASIK?](#)

How Dr. Cohen Can Help

As a respected and talented ophthalmologist, Dr. Cohen has a long track record of success (click his photo to learn more about him). He will perform a thorough examination of your eyes and work with you personally to create a surgery plan that is designed specifically for you. We are proud to say that we get a great deal of our business from referrals and look forward to adding you to the list of [our extremely satisfied customers!](#)

If you have any questions at all or simply want to know more about LASIK and PRK, and other laser vision correction options in Manhattan, Glendale NY, the greater NYC area, or Old Bridge, New Jersey and surrounding cities, we welcome you to email us, call (212) 764-2020 or (866) 731-3937, or [visit us in person.](#)



[Schedule a FREE Consultation!](#)

