


Premium*
VisionCorrection



“The real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes... but in having new eyes.”

Marcel Proust

PREMIUM VISION CORRECTION

Thank you for considering Specialist Eye Centre for your Premium Vision Correction. We understand that this is an extremely important decision that will improve your lifestyle immeasurably. Like many patients, you may be feeling excited about the prospect of being freed from the dependency on glasses or contacts, but you may also have questions about the procedure you will be undergoing. In this brochure, we attempt to answer some of those questions, providing you with information about the benefits, potential risks, and steps of the procedure.

IMAGINE



Less dependence on glasses or contact lenses

Waking up in the morning and seeing the clock

Swimming and being able to see other people,
lanes or the pool edge

Seeing whilst putting on make-up or shaving

Seeing clearly in the shower

Finding your towel at the beach

Having people notice your eyes instead
of your glasses

Playing sport without glasses that fog,
or contact lenses that dry out in the wind

Saving money by not continually buying
contact lenses and cleaning solutions,
or replacing lost lenses and glasses

Saving time by not looking for glasses,
or cleaning contact lenses

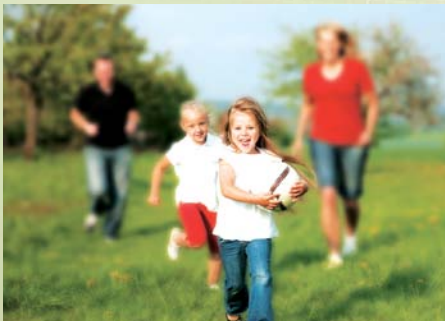
An easier, freer life

IMAGINE... SEEING CLEARLY



OUT OF FOCUS?

Good quality clear vision depends on your cornea (the clear window at the front of the eye) and your lens focussing ("refracting") light rays perfectly on the retina at the back of your eye. If you cannot see clearly at all distances without the help of glasses or contact lenses, you may have one or more of the following conditions, which are commonly referred to as "refractive errors".



SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS



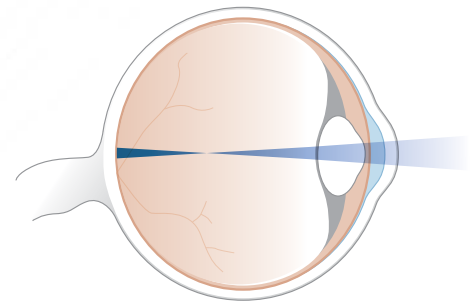
LONG-SIGHTEDNESS



ASTIGMATISM

MYOPIA (SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS)

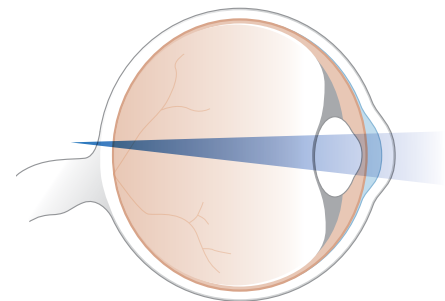
The cornea/lens complex is too strong for your eye, so the light rays come into focus before they reach the retina. You can see objects that are close, but cannot see things in the distance without glasses or contact lenses.



MYOPIA

HYPEROPIA (LONG-SIGHTEDNESS)

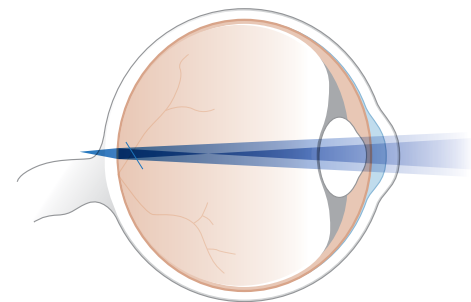
The cornea/lens complex is too weak for your eye, so the light rays come into focus beyond the retina. You can see some things that are in the distance, but need glasses or contact lenses for objects that are close. If you are very far-sighted, even distant objects appear blurry.



HYPEROPIA

ASTIGMATISM

Your cornea has an abnormal curvature, and is shaped more like a rugby ball than a basketball. Light rays do not focus at a point at any distance without the help of glasses or contact lenses. Astigmatism often occurs in combination with myopia or hyperopia.



ASTIGMATISM

PRESBYOPIA (WEAKENING READING VISION)

This is a common condition first occurring in the 40s to 50s where the lens in your eye hardens and loses its ability to change shape as a result of ageing. It means that you can no longer focus on near objects without the help of reading glasses. Please see the Presbyopia facts sheet for more information.



GETTING IN FOCUS

Of course, glasses and contact lenses can correct your lack of focus. But you would like to dispense with the cost and inconvenience of them, or perhaps just don't like the way you look or feel in them. So what safe and dependable methods are available to you?



Laser Procedures on the Cornea

LASIK WITH INTRALASE

LASIK is the most commonly performed procedure for dealing with focussing problems. The visual recovery time is the most rapid with LASIK. It is a blade-free procedure where a fine flap (0.11mm thick) is made with the Intralase Laser. A second cool laser beam then painlessly reshapes the cornea, and the flap is folded back into its natural position. Healing begins almost immediately.

LASIK WITH MICRO-KERATOME (BLADE)

Essentially the same procedure as above, but the flap is created using a

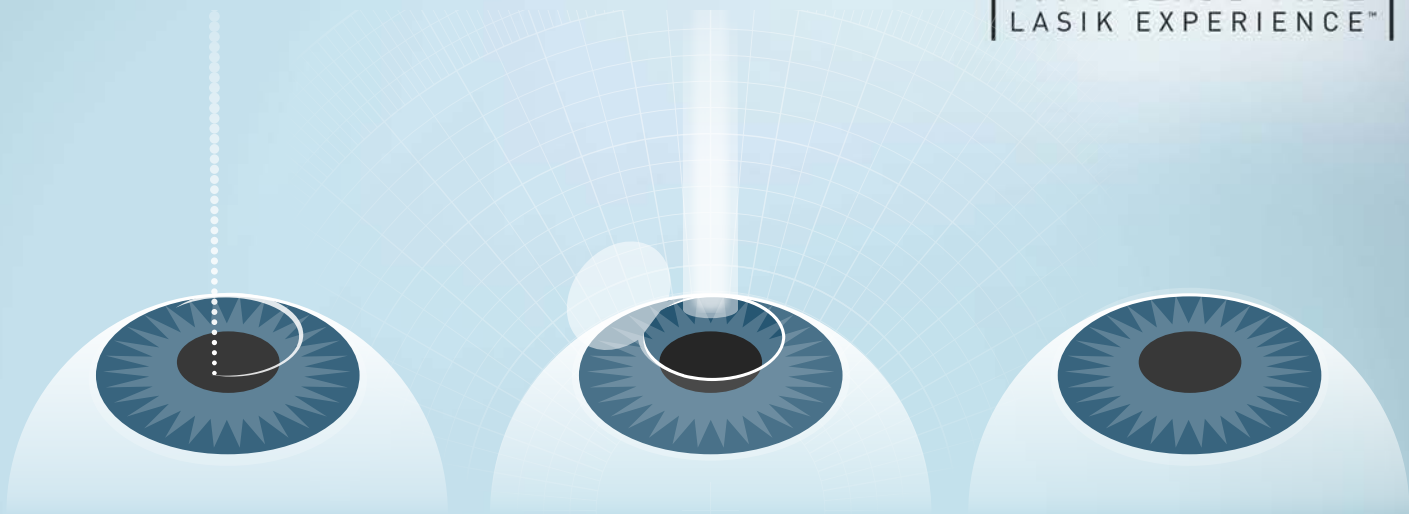
blade. Although a safe procedure also, the surgery is not offered through Specialist Eye Centre, as we feel the Intralase Laser method of creating the flap is safer, more accurate, and more predictable, with a dramatic reduction in flap complications.

ASLA (ADVANCED SURFACE LASER ABLATION)

This procedure is of benefit to those whose corneas are too thin for LASIK. No flap is created. The re-shaping laser is applied directly to the front surface of the cornea. Visual recovery is generally slower than LASIK, discomfort is not uncommon, and you may need to take more time off work. The end result however is as excellent as LASIK.



**100% BLADE-FREE
LASIK EXPERIENCE™**



LASIK WITH INTRALASE:

1. A CORNEAL FLAP IS CREATED BY LASER

2. THE CORNEAL FLAP IS FOLDED BACK. AN EXCIMER LASER RESHAPES THE CORNEA.

3. THE CORNEAL FLAP IS FOLDED BACK IN PLACE COMPLETING THE PROCEDURE.

Lens Procedures

PHAKIC INTRAOCULAR LENS (PHAKIC IOL)

This procedure is of benefit to those with high-order focussing problems, where re-shaping the cornea would not be enough to correct error. A soft lens is inserted in the chamber behind your cornea and in front of your iris. Your cornea and natural lens are left untouched.

Phakic IOLs are a more invasive treatment than laser vision correction. For this reason, implantable contact lenses are generally recommended for patients who are not good candidates for laser vision correction, either

because the correction is too high or because the corneas are too thin.

LENS EXCHANGE/INTRAOCULAR LENS IMPLANT

Beneficial to over 55's, this procedure is identical to cataract surgery. Your natural lens is removed and replaced with an implant which has a power more appropriate for your eye.

What's Best for You?

At your initial assessment, (which can take up to 2 hours), an extremely detailed and thorough examination of your eyes, as well as numerous measurements on our state-of-the-art equipment will be undertaken.

Dr Fernando will discuss with you options available to you, and what is felt to be the preferred option. Possible risks and complications will be discussed in detail. You will be made aware of what to expect on the day of treatment and afterwards.

LASIK & ASLA

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

You have questions, we have the answers! The following section provides the most frequently asked questions from our patients and their respective answers.

How long has LASIK been performed?

LASIK vision correction has been performed around the world for more than 20 years, with more than 10 million cases carried out safely. It was first introduced into Australia in 1991. The major components of the procedure have a long history and safety record.

Ophthalmologists have been reshaping the cornea for over 50 years, creating a hinged flap in the cornea for over 40 years, and using the Excimer laser since the 1980s. The Intralase laser has been used in Australia with great success since 2004.

I am happy with my glasses or contact lenses. Should I have LASIK?

If you are completely comfortable wearing glasses or contact lenses, are not bothered by being dependent on them, and find that they do not impact on your lifestyle, you have no need for the procedure.

Am I suitable for LASIK?

You need to be at least 20 years old, with good general and eye health. You

need to be able to see clearly with your current glasses or contact lenses, and the prescription should not have changed over the last 12 months. You should not be pregnant or breast feeding.

An in-depth assessment at Specialist Eye Centre with our state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment will determine if your eyes are suitable for LASIK or alternative treatments.

At Specialist Eye Centre, we will only perform Lasik on you if we believe that we can obtain an excellent result. Approximately 30% of the patients that come to us for Lasik are advised not to have the procedure, because we believe they are less than ideal candidates.

Am I obligated to have surgery if I have an assessment visit?

Of course not! If you do not want to proceed then there is no obligation to book in for the surgery. You should not rush your decision.

At our clinic, many patients are brought back for a further visit during the decision making process. If the surgery doesn't feel right for you then it is not right for us.

Do I have to discontinue contact lens wear before assessment or treatment?

If the calculations for surgery are created with a cornea that is distorted by long-term contact lens use, the surgical (and permanent) correction will be equally distorted. If you wear contact lenses, it is a good idea to stop wearing them before your baseline evaluation and switch to wearing your glasses full-time.

For soft contact lenses, you should stop wearing them for at least 3 days prior to your assessment and laser treatment. Toric soft lenses should be discontinued at least 2 weeks prior to assessment and treatment. For Rigid Gas Permeable (RGP)/ Hard lenses, the period is 3 weeks. If there are any signs of contact lens related distortion, you will be asked to return after an extended period without contact lenses, to ensure we are measuring your cornea in a completely natural state.

Where does the procedure take place?

The procedure is performed at a Sydney-based fully accredited Laser

IMAGINE...
an easier, freer life.



LASIK & ASLA

FAQs continued...

Suite so that you have access to the latest technology available at the time of your surgery – currently the Blade-free Lasik technique with Intralase. You will be at the centre for a few hours only. No fees are payable at the Laser Suite – all facility fees are covered by your surgical fee.

Can I have both eyes done with LASIK eye surgery at the same time?

In the vast majority of cases, LASIK eye surgery on both eyes at the same time has been shown to be safe and effective. In fact, more than 95% of people choose to have both eyes done at the same time. If the surgery of your first eye is not perfect, Dr Fernando will likely hold off on proceeding with the second eye until he is happy with your first eye.

What does the procedure involve?

In the first step of the LASIK procedure, the Intralase laser creates a hinged flap in the front of your cornea (0.11mm thick). You will feel some pressure, but no pain. In the second step of the LASIK procedure, the Excimer laser microscopically reshapes your cornea painlessly, before the hinged flap is replaced. Remarkably, and rapidly, the flap adheres in minutes, without sutures.

How long will the LASIK procedure take?

The whole procedure takes about 15 minutes for two eyes, including creating the flap and performing the laser procedure. The actual laser is used for less than one minute. You will be at the treatment centre for a few hours, and will have your eyes checked by Dr Fernando before you leave.

Does LASIK hurt?

Patients are given a topical anaesthetic (eye drops) to numb the eye, so they experience no pain during the procedure. You lie down for the procedure, relax and stare at a little light which keeps your eye still. The doctor keeps your eye open with a small retainer which feels like you are opening your eyes very wide with your finger tips.

When the surgeon applies the vacuum ring, the patient experiences a sensation of slight pressure just before his or her vision fades away for a few seconds. Neither the Intralase laser nor the Excimer laser cause any pain or discomfort.

For several hours after the procedure, many patients describe a mild “foreign body” sensation, such as after opening the eyes whilst swimming in chlorinated water. After the first few hours, this uncomfortable feeling usually subsides. Mild analgesia such as Panadol can be used if necessary.

I am still anxious...

Anxiety is to be expected, and your surgeon, Dr Fernando, will calmly guide you through the process. You will be offered a mild sedative (Valium) prior to the procedure.

Can I drive immediately after having LASIK?

You may experience some discomfort and/or blurred vision for a few hours after laser eye surgery. In addition, most patients receive a sedative prior to vision correction surgery. Therefore, you cannot drive home after undergoing the LASIK procedure and you should plan not to drive for at least 24 hours. Most people have vision good enough to drive the day after surgery, but please do not drive until we advise you it is safe to do so. Please read our Recommended Activity Schedule.

How long will I be off work after having LASIK?

It depends on your occupation. Certain jobs that require intense clarity of vision (flying planes and surgery, for example) may be difficult to perform for one or two days. Most patients can return to work the next day, assuming their vision is adequate for their job. However, some people may feel fatigued for a day or so following surgery. Please read our Recommended Activity Schedule.

Can I play sports after LASIK surgery?

You can resume most normal activities immediately after laser eye surgery. However, for at least one week you will need to avoid activities that could cause perspiration to run into your eyes. You should wear safety glasses while playing contact sports whether or not you have had surgery. If you do not routinely wear safety glasses, Dr Fernando may recommend wearing them for at least one month after LASIK surgery. You will also need to avoid certain activities, such as contact sports and swimming, for at least 2 weeks. It is important to consult Dr Fernando in regards to the limitations on specific activities following LASIK eye surgery. Please read our Recommended Activity Schedule.

How long will it take before I can see well and how long will it be before I experience my best vision?

Fast visual recovery characterises this operation. Ninety percent of your visual recovery occurs in the first 24-48 hours. Most patients achieve reasonably good vision on the day of surgery and find that their eyes feel fairly normal within a day. However, vision can continue to improve and best vision can still take two to three months to occur, particularly with higher prescriptions. If necessary,

adjustments to the surgery, called enhancements, can be done. Hyperopic patients who undergo LASIK vision correction often need to wait longer to see clearly.

What kind of results can I expect from having a LASIK procedure?

The vast majority of patients no longer need glasses or contact lenses for distance vision after laser vision correction treatment.

Ninety-nine percent of patients will have vision good enough to pass the RTA drivers' licence vision test without glasses. Over 95% of patients with low to moderate refractive errors achieve 20/20 vision or better after the initial laser procedure. This number increases to over 99% when an enhancement procedure is included, if needed.

The major visual aim is for independence from wearing spectacles on a day to day basis. This has special relevance to patients who are totally dependent on their glasses just to get around. Therefore it is largely a very successful operation.

After the treatment, a small refractive error may remain. Most people in the community who do not wear glasses also have a small refractive error. Their vision for their daily activities is more than enough for their needs, so they

IMAGINE... playing sport without glasses that fog, or contact lenses that dry out in the wind.



LASIK & ASLA

FAQs continued...



Imagine... seeing
whilst putting on
make-up or shaving.



elect not to put up with the cost and inconvenience of optical aids to extract that last little bit of acuity. The same goes for post LASIK patients, except they also may have the option of an enhancement, which they may or may not feel the need for.

Some patients still find that a "fine tuning" pair of weak spectacles is necessary for occasional demanding tasks such as night driving, but 98% of patients are sufficiently improved that without spectacles they are living their everyday life such as walking, working, swimming and going out with friends.

There can be no guarantees that you will have perfect vision, because each person's eye responds in a slightly different way. You should be wary of anyone that suggests such a guarantee is possible. This is particularly true if you have a higher refractive error. Patients with high myopia (more than -8D), moderate hyperopia (more than +4D), or high astigmatism (more than 3.5D) should have realistic expectations. Patients requiring higher amounts of correction will have less accurate results. The general rule is: more accurate results will be obtained in people who require less treatment.

If you will only be satisfied with perfect 20/20 vision without glasses, then Laser corrective surgery is not for you. It is important that anyone considering LASIK have realistic expectations.

Expect to eliminate or decrease your dependence on glasses or contact lenses. People who are most satisfied with the results of laser correction clearly understand the potential risks and complications and possess realistic expectations as to what their vision will be like after surgery.

Are the results achieved from LASIK permanent?

The effects of the LASIK procedure are permanent. However, it is important to realise that a person's eye can still change internally. That is why many vision correction surgeons recommend having the procedure done after the major eye changes have occurred in one's life. If the procedure is performed after the age of 20, the chance of long-term stable correction is more likely. Even the eyes of patients over the age of 20 can still change. It is best to wait until your prescription has stabilised, and remains unchanged for at least one year.

What are "Enhancements"?

Not all patients get a perfect result from laser vision correction. This may be due to under-correction, over-correction, or one of the complications described in detail in the LASIK & ASLA - Potential Risks and Complications facts sheet. The most common problem is a slightly abnormal healing response, resulting in under-correction or over-correction.

Patients who experience under-correction or over-correction can usually undergo a second procedure to obtain a better correction. In most cases, a significant improvement in vision will occur, but it is important to realise that this, too, is a laser procedure, and therefore has the same risks that the first laser procedure had. It is possible but extremely rare that your vision can be worse after a "touch-up" procedure. Complications can occur, even if no complications occurred during your first procedure.

If your vision is quite good after your laser treatment, but not perfect, you should consider carefully whether you want to have a "touch-up" procedure. If your vision is really not satisfactory for your needs, then an enhancement is a good idea. Enhancement procedures are quicker and easier to perform than the initial treatment. The enhancement rate is around 5%. The majority of patients who choose to have an enhancement still have quite good vision – just not as good as we can make it.

If an enhancement is required, a patient must wait at least 3-6 months after the initial laser eye surgery. Only 1 eye is done at a time (4-8 weeks between each eye.)

Enhancement treatments may also be a viable solution to vision changes later in life. However, it is important to be

aware that other treatment options also exist. In due course, you should consult with Dr Fernando to determine the cause of the change and to determine which option is best for you.

Will I need to wear glasses once my eyes have healed?

Most patients who have the LASIK procedure do not wear glasses for their daily activities. It is possible that some patients need a minimal prescription for more visually challenging activities, such as night driving.

The normal eye loses its ability to focus on near objects in the 40s to 50s. This is caused by the normal ageing of the eye, also known as presbyopia. It remains important to note that this condition occurs with or without LASIK vision correction. However, if you are in your 40s, leaving one eye mildly short-sighted (ie. monovision) following LASIK can help delay or eliminate the need for reading glasses.

If you are over 40, Dr Fernando will discuss your options with you. We suggest that patients trial monovision with contact lenses prior to opting for monovision with LASIK vision correction. Be sure to ask if this trial option is available to you.

Please see the Presbyopia facts sheet for a full discussion of the condition and how it may affect you currently, or later in life, depending on your age.

LASIK & ASLA

FAQs continued...

Will my eyes look different after LASIK vision correction?

No. Your eyes will look exactly the same. Occasionally some patients may have small red patches on the white of their eyes which fade over a couple of weeks.

Are there risks with LASIK?

Most studies show that the LASIK procedure poses minimal risk of complications. The overall complication rate is less than one percent. Even if complications do occur, most of the issues are resolved within three months and do not result in long-term interference with vision. More precisely, the sight-threatening complication rate cited in large studies is between 0.001% and 0.05%. LASIK surgery is a surgical procedure done on a delicate part of the eye and therefore, complications can occur. Treatment should not be undertaken if you cannot accept there is a rare possibility of a complication that could permanently reduce vision in an eye. For additional information, please see the LASIK & ASLA - Potential Risks and Complications facts sheet.

What is ASLA laser eye surgery?

ASLA (Advanced Surface Laser Ablation) eye surgery is similar to LASIK eye surgery in the sense that both procedures employ a computer-controlled

excimer laser to reshape the cornea of the affected eye. However, during the LASIK procedure, the surgeon preserves the epithelium (the outermost protective layer of the eye) by creating a flap. During ASLA vision correction, the epithelium is removed by gently scraping the surface (ie. no flap is created).

Anaesthetic drops in the eye ensure that the patient experiences as little discomfort as possible. Soft contact lenses are worn for 3-4 days following the procedure to help with the discomfort. ASLA is usually reserved for those whose corneas are too thin or irregular to have LASIK. Although the visual results are the same as LASIK, ASLA laser eye surgery is characterised by a lengthier healing process and greater discomfort than LASIK eye surgery. Most patients function well for normal daily activities after a few days. It can take 2 weeks to achieve 20/20 vision.

Not everyone can have LASIK surgery, but can anyone have ASLA surgery?

Patients who have autoimmune disorders (Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis), a history of aggressive scar formation after a skin incision (called Keloids) or those with certain degenerative eye disorders are not eligible for ASLA surgery. Minimum corneal thickness requirements still apply. Your suitability for ASLA surgery

will be determined at your pre-operative evaluation.

What follow-up care is required?

You will be seen a few hours after surgery, and then have post-operative checks at approximately 1-2 weeks, 4-6 weeks, 4-6 months and annually thereafter. These checks can be performed at Specialist Eye Centre, or with your referring eyecare practitioner (if you were referred by one, and that is more convenient for you). Consultations in the first year are covered by your surgery fee.

ASLA patients also need to be seen on the third or fourth day after surgery.

Do I need to use any drops or medication after surgery?

You will be given antibiotic and anti-inflammatory drops which you need to use in the week following surgery, as well as some lubricants to be used in the month after surgery, especially if you have a tendency towards dry eyes.

Are your prices competitive?

Yes. We are in the middle range, compared to providers in Sydney. We do not attempt to compete with discount laser clinics, as we make no compromises on your vision and outcome. We do not use anything other than the most up-to-date

diagnostic and laser equipment which are very costly to buy, lease, and maintain. Be aware of conditions and restrictions imposed by low-cost competitors.

Do any rebates apply for laser eye surgery?

Medicare rebates do not apply unless you are having laser surgery for residual astigmatism following cataract surgery.

Some health funds rebate for laser eye surgery – check with yours.

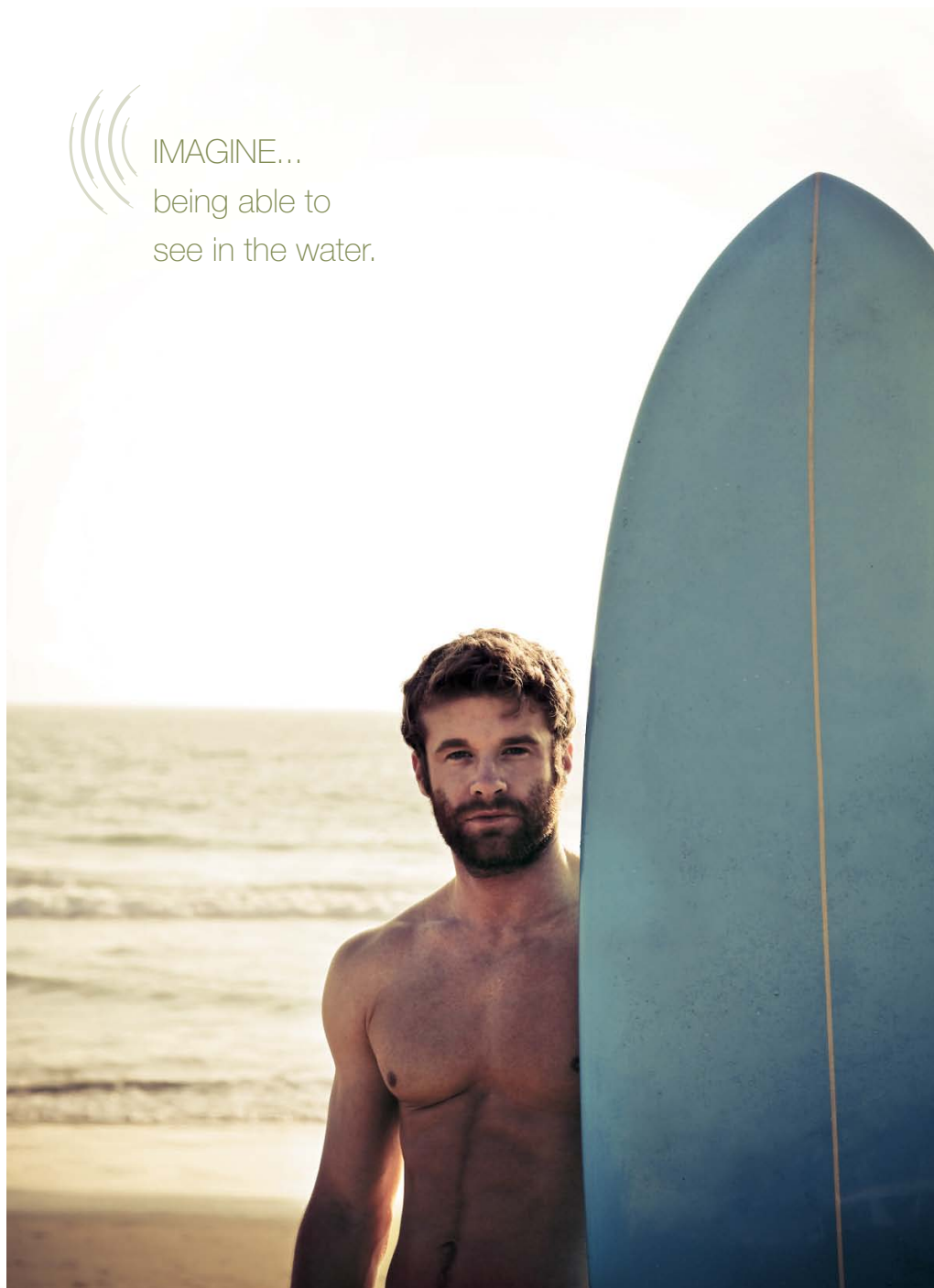
You are likely to be eligible for a 20% medical expenses rebate. Please check with your accountant / tax agent.

Is finance available?

If you would prefer to pay off the surgery over time then we have arrangements with medical procedure finance companies to schedule payments. Note that your arrangements are with the finance company and not with us directly. For many patients it is the most affordable option. In some cases interest free periods may be available.



IMAGINE...
being able to
see in the water.





Your Journey to Better
Vision Starts Here



Specialist Eye Centre,
271 Russell Street PO Box 1379, Bathurst NSW 2795.
Ph: 02 6331 3989. **Fax:** 02 6332 1106
Web: www.SECpremium.com.au