



Laser Vision Correction Program Member Q&A

1. Who is QualSight?

QualSight provides a managed Laser Vision Correction (i.e. Traditional and Custom LASIK, PRK, and IntraLase (bladeless) technologies) program through a national, credentialed network of the nation's most experienced LASIK surgeons. QualSight is the nation's largest Laser Vision Correction program manager, providing LASIK savings to over 65 million eligible health plan members nationwide.

2. What is LASIK?

LASIK (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis) is an outpatient treatment that uses an Excimer Laser (cool beam of light) to gently reshape the front surface of the eye (the cornea). Reshaping the cornea redirects the light angle as it enters the eye to refocus correctly on the retina. This allows images to be more sharply focused. Vision recovery is rapid, and there is little or no post-operative pain. With refractive procedures, your dependence upon glasses and contact lenses should diminish significantly.

3. What is the difference between Traditional and Custom LASIK?

Traditional and Custom LASIK treat moderate to severe refractive disorders, such as nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism. For both Traditional and Custom LASIK, your surgeon uses a surgical instrument called a microkeratome blade to create a thin flap to access your cornea. Custom LASIK, also known as Wavefront LASIK, uses an advanced technology (Wavefront Analyzer) to map the corneal surface 3-dimensionally, guiding the laser in re-shaping the front part of the eye (cornea). The 3-dimensional data from the Wavefront Analyzer is then electronically transferred to the laser, enabling your surgeon to customize the LASIK procedure to your unique visual requirements. Depending on your prescription and eye shape, your doctor will be able to determine which type of treatment is best for your individual condition.

4. What is IntraLase (Bladeless LASIK)?

With IntraLase (Bladeless) LASIK, the surgeon uses a laser to create the corneal flap. This technology enables the surgeon to customize the corneal flap for each individual patient. The remainder of the surgery is the same as Traditional LASIK or Custom LASIK. Recent studies conducted on IntraLase technology suggest it may be possible to treat those who were previously unable to have LASIK surgery due to thin corneas.

5. Can LASIK be done if I have astigmatism?

Yes, the LASIK procedure has been approved to effectively treat astigmatism as well as myopia (nearsightedness) and hyperopia (farsightedness).

6. What does it cost?

Through the QualSight network, Traditional LASIK surgery is \$895 per eye, and Custom LASIK \$1,320 per eye. IntraLase (Bladeless) LASIK is available through participating providers for an additional \$450 per eye, whether performed with Traditional or Custom LASIK.

7. Who is eligible?

Blue Shield members and their eligible dependents (over the age of 18) may obtain savings on LASIK through the QualSight network. Members must reside in California and utilize the QualSight network in California.

8. What about the ads I have been seeing that claim to charge \$499 for LASIK?

That price is usually an introductory price only available to a very small segment of the population (usually less than 5%). Many offices will charge separately for the pre-operative evaluation as well as follow up visits. They also typically charge significantly more for higher levels of correction based on prescription. The national average price for LASIK is over \$2000 per eye. The QualSight LASIK program is all inclusive with no hidden fees and represents a savings of 40% to 50% off the national average charge for Traditional LASIK.

9. How do I get started?

You will need to schedule your initial appointment with QualSight by calling toll-free at **1-877-437-6110**. A QualSight Care Manager will register your call, do a zip code search for providers in your area and answer your questions. Once you have selected a provider in your area, the Care Manager will schedule your appointment at the doctor's office with you on the phone.

10. Is a deposit required to book the appointment?

Yes. QualSight will collect a refundable deposit of up to \$550 (\$50 scheduling deposit and the remaining \$500 after the pre-operative appointment), payable by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express) or by personal check. The deposit is deducted from the total amount due for surgery, and the remaining balance will be collected on the day of the surgery by the doctor's office. In the event you do not proceed with LASIK, for any reason, QualSight will refund your deposit.

11. Why do I need to put down a deposit?

The deposit holds your appointment and confirms your eligibility for QualSight pricing with your doctor's office. **The deposit is not an additional charge** and will be deducted from your total procedure price. If you don't qualify for LASIK, or choose not to have the surgery for any reason, your deposit is refundable through QualSight.

12. I don't have a credit card. Can I use another form of payment?

Yes, we accept personal checks, Telecheck® and money orders. We also offer financing through GE CareCredit®, which enables you to finance your procedure payment at 0% interest for up to six months or select an extended payment plan with minimum payments as low as \$51 per month*.

13. How does QualSight select the doctors in the network?

All of our doctors are Board Certified Ophthalmologists and only use FDA approved technology. They have been credentialed according to URAC standards by an impartial third party called VerifPoint. QualSight has also collected their professional and educational history for you. When you call QualSight, you will be given a choice of approved doctors that participate in your area.

14. I wear contacts. Will I have to revert to wearing glasses before the surgery?

Yes. Contact lenses can change the shape of your cornea for up to several weeks after you have stopped using them. Not leaving your contact lenses out long enough for your cornea to return to its natural shape before surgery can lead to an inaccurate correction. Each physician has their own protocol for contact lens removal, but at a minimum, we recommend you remove your soft contacts one week prior to your initial appointment and your hard contacts for several weeks.

15. What can I expect at the first pre-operative appointment?

Expect to be at the doctor's office for one to two hours. Your physician will test your eyes for your prescription and uncover any medical problems. Your eyes may be dilated, and they will scan your eyes to get a 3-dimensional image of the shape of your eyes.

16. What can I expect during the actual procedure?

The procedure lasts only 10 seconds; however, the entire surgical visit can take up to two hours. Your laser treatment is specifically designed by your surgeon based on measurements gathered at the pre-operative exam. Make sure you schedule a one-day follow up appointment. Remember to ask your doctor or technician any additional questions and share any concerns regarding the procedure. Patients will not be allowed to drive themselves home after their procedure; you will be required to have a person to drive you home.

17. What if I need enhancements / additional post-operative care?

Your total charge will include a pre-operative appointment, the LASIK procedure, up to four post-operative appointments (usually one day, one week, one month and three months) and a one-year retreatment plan. During this first year should you need an enhancement, or "touch-up," your cost for an enhancement will be between \$110 - \$300 (laser manufacturing fee) per eye, depending on the procedure when medically advisably.

The QualSight program is available to members to provide access to QualSight preferred pricing for LASIK surgery. This discount program service is not a covered benefit of Blue Shield health plans and none of the terms or conditions of Blue Shield health plans apply.

*Subject to GE CareCredit® approval.