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## Consent for Bilateral PRK

### Introduction

In the United States, the FDA recommends a minimum interval of three months between treatment of the first eye and treatment of the second eye. The second eye may be treated sooner or even at the same time; however, there may be risks associated with simultaneous treatment that are not present when the eyes are treated on different days. **If you elect to have surgery performed on both eyes at the same time, you must understand the possible advantages and disadvantages of your decision.**

The **advantages** of having laser vision correction (such as PRK) performed on **one eye at a time** include:

**Safety:** You will not experience the risk of getting an infection in both eyes at the same time, which, although rare, could lead to significant loss of vision in both eyes.

It is also possible to develop delayed cloudiness in the cornea or even corneal scarring which is not visible immediately after the procedure. Although this is uncommon and generally clears with time, it can result in significant loss of vision for a prolonged period. Should this occur in both eyes at the same time, carrying out normal activities could be difficult.

**Accuracy:** The doctor can monitor your healing process in the first eye and may be able to make appropriate modifications to the treatment plan for the second eye if necessary, increasing the likelihood of a better outcome in the second eye.

**Visual Recovery:** You will be able to function with your fellow eye while the first eye is healing. Therefore, you may be able to return to work and drive earlier. This is particularly important if your healing is delayed and vision remains blurred for a prolonged period.

**Satisfaction:** You will be given the opportunity to determine whether the procedure has produced satisfactory visual results without loss of vision or other undesirable side effects such as glare, ghost images, or increased light sensitivity. If you are over age 40, you will have an opportunity to experience the change in your close vision, which results from the correction of your nearsightedness. This could influence your decision on whether or not to fully correct your other eye to maintain some degree of close vision without the need for reading glasses (monovision).

The **disadvantages** of having laser vision correction performed **on one eye at a time** include:

**Convenience:** It may be more inconvenient to have each eye treated at separate visits. This will necessitate two periods of recovery from the laser surgery and may require additional time away from work.

**Visual Recovery:** There will be a potential period of imbalance between your two eyes. This is especially important if you are unable to wear a contact lens in your unoperated eye. It is not usually possible to use the (unaided) operated eye along with a strong corrective lens in the unoperated eye because this can create a strong sense of imbalance, dizziness, and a form of double vision.

**Cost:** Professional and facility fees may be greater than if surgery were performed at the same visit for both eyes.

The **advantages** of having laser vision correction performed on **both eyes at the same time** are:

**Convenience:** It may be more convenient to have both eyes treated during the same visit.

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**Visual Recovery:** The balance in vision between your two eyes may be restored more rapidly. This is especially important if you are unable to wear a contact lens in your unoperated eye.

**Cost:** Professional and facility fees may be reduced, and, if both eyes heal satisfactorily, you may miss less work.

The **risks** of having laser vision correction performed on **both eyes at the same time** include:

**Safety:** The risk of infection and other healing complications is applicable to both eyes simultaneously. Therefore, if an infection occurs in one eye, it may also occur in the other eye. Although rare, a serious infection in both eyes can cause significant loss of vision or even temporary or permanent legal blindness.

**Accuracy:** By correcting both eyes simultaneously, there is no opportunity to learn from the healing patterns of the first eye before treating the second eye. Therefore, if there is an overcorrection or undercorrection in one eye, chances are it will happen in both eyes. If a re-treatment is required in one eye, it is quite possible that the other eye will also require a re-treatment.

**Visual Recovery:** Patients who heal abnormally have taken several weeks to heal, whether they have surgery on one eye or both eyes. There is no way of predicting how long your eyes will take to heal. This can result in prolonged recovery of normal vision. Blurred vision may continue in both eyes from one to two weeks or longer to the point that safe driving may not be possible. Therefore, it may be necessary to take one or more weeks off work.

**Satisfaction:** Both eyes tend to experience similar side effects. If you experience any undesirable side effects such as glare, ghost images, increased light sensitivity, or corneal haze in one eye, you will likely experience the same conditions in the other eye. These side effects may cause a decrease in vision or other negative effects, and some patients have elected not to have their second eye treated.

**Consent Statement:**

"I have read and understand the above risks and benefits of bilateral simultaneous PRK, and I understand that this summary does not include a discussion of every possible risk, benefit, and complication that can result from bilateral simultaneous PRK. My doctor has answered all of my questions about the PRK procedure. I wish to have both eyes treated during the same treatment session if my doctor determines that the treatment in the first eye appeared to be technically satisfactory.

The reason(s) I wish to have both eyes treated in the same visit are:

- Greater convenience       Less time away from work       Possible faster recovery
- Elimination of possible vision imbalance between treated and untreated eyes.
- I have moderate to extreme difficulty with contact lens wear, and/or I am contact lens intolerant. I would be unlikely to be able to comfortably wear a contact lens in my unoperated eye during the recovery period of my first eye.

Other Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initial