

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING PRK SURGERY

1. Numbing, anesthetic drops will be instilled prior to surgery.
2. You will be seated on a reclining chair and then positioned under the laser. The eye which will not undergo surgery first will be occluded by an eye-shield.
3. Your eyelids will be draped and a device which will keep your eyelids open will be placed between your lids. You may feel some pressure on your lids.
4. You will be directed to look at a blinking amber light. If you lose sight of the Fixation light, continue to look in the direction where you last saw the light. Any Apparent movement of the blinking amber light is an illusion. **Keep both eyes open; the occluder is covering the other eye.**
5. **You will be asked to fixate on the blinking amber light. It may be a bit dim and blurry, and may appear orange. It cannot be focused, so don't try to look intently at it. Instead, look THROUGH the center of the blinking blur with a relaxed gaze, off into the distance. Even if you lose sight of the blinking light, don't look around for it; just keep looking in the direction where you last saw the light. The light never actually moves or stops blinking.** The laser will then be activated to ablate (remove) the surface layer of corneal tissue. You will hear a snapping sound, the intensity of which will fade as the ablation nears completion. It is important that you maintain fixation during the initial laser treatment. Do not be anxious; the surgeon can stop the laser at any time and restart from where he left off. This step only removes the surface layer of the cornea (epithelium).
6. Your surgeon will then make sure the epithelial (surface) layer of the cornea has been completely removed. He may wipe the surface of the cornea to be sure. He will then ask you again to fixate on the blinking amber light. Follow the suggestions in step number 5 above. Your surgeon will then activate the laser to remove the necessary amount of tissue to correct your prescription.
7. Drops will be instilled. A bandage soft contact lens will be inserted into the eye to provide a protective barrier which will also make the eye more comfortable. You do not have to worry about removing the lens; your doctor will do so, once the surface layer of the cornea has regenerated. The drapes and lid device will be removed. You will be instructed to keep both eyes open and to avoid blinking during this step.

Don't worry, you are not expected to memorize these steps. You will be talked through the entire procedure.