

MONOVISION

Distance and Near vision correction

“Monovision” is a vision correction strategy that will be offered to anyone aged 40 and over, regardless of the type of refractive surgery recommended. The dominant eye, whether right or left, is corrected for best distance vision – 20/20 or as near as possible. The other eye is treated to be mildly near-sighted. This arrangement allows for relative freedom from glasses, for distance or reading.

Adjusting to monovision can take as little as a day and as much as several months. We find that 95% of those treated this way will adjust and enjoy the benefits of monovision.

The goals of monovision are: (1) good functional distance vision; (2) good functional near vision; and (3) a minimal need for glasses. About 80% of those who choose monovision feel free of glasses. The other 20% find they need glasses in some situations: (a) for reading – the lower the light in the room, the greater the need for glasses; the finer the print size, the greater the need; and (b) to optimize distance vision for reading street signs while driving – especially at night.

When monovision is offered to patients undergoing laser vision correction, the surgeon will aim for a degree of near vision in the non-dominant eye that is appropriate to the age of the patient. Younger people, whose eyes still have some ability to focus up close, will need a milder near-sightedness. Inasmuch as there is a limit to the amount of refractive difference between the two eyes that the brain will tolerate, monovision cannot be “increased” indefinitely with aging. Patients can expect to need reading glasses eventually. Most, however, will do well with intermediate-range tasks – sitting at the computer; looking in the mirror; seeing food on the table – and most reading tasks, without the need for glasses.

Monovision is equally an option for patients undergoing cataract surgery or refractive lens exchange. Most patients treated this way will feel free of glasses. Some, however, will benefit from a prescription for occasional reading (with lower light and finer print) and driving (especially at night). Again, most will do very well at the usual day-to-day activities without the need for glasses.