

Information for Patients

Seeing without glasses



Universitair
Ziekenhuis
Brussel

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What is your eye problem?

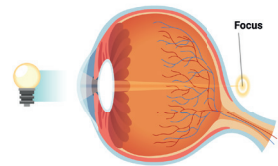
Do you want to see clearly without glasses or contact lenses? We offer various treatments to improve your vision: laser treatment, an implantable contact lens (ICL), or lens replacement.

Before each treatment, we perform a thorough preliminary examination. During this exam, we will discuss the best treatment for your specific needs. In this brochure, you will find all the information about the treatments, including conditions, benefits, possible risks, and prices.

HYPEROPIA (PRESBYOPIA)

You can see distant objects clearly, but nearby objects are blurry.

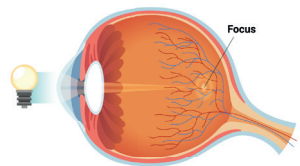
This is because your eyeball is too short. The image forms behind the retina instead of on it.



MYOPIA (NEARSIGHTEDNESS)

You can see nearby objects clearly, but distant objects are blurry.

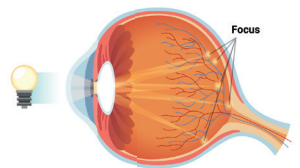
This is because your eyeball is too long. The image forms in front of the retina instead of on it.



ASTIGMATISM

Your vision is blurry or distorted, both near and far.

This is often caused by an irregular shape of your cornea, which prevents the image from focusing clearly on a single point on the retina.



Preliminary Examination

Before performing a treatment, we carry out a thorough preliminary examination. This takes about 1.5 hours.

We measure, among other things:

- The precise strength of the refraction of your eyes
- The shape (corneal topography) and thickness (pachymetry) of your cornea.
- The health of your optic nerve and retina (OCT scan).
- Your eye pressure and pupil size.

The preliminary exams may be carried out over several days if necessary.

Based on these measurements, we determine whether treatment is possible and create a treatment plan tailored to your eyes and lifestyle.

Preparation for the Preliminary Examination

Before the examination, you should avoid wearing contact lenses for a few weeks:

- 1 week for soft lenses.
- 4 weeks for toric soft lenses, hard lenses, and overnight lenses

Please have someone bring you home. Due to the eye drops, your vision will be temporarily blurry, so you should not drive in the first few hours after the examination.

Treatments

There are three possible treatments to improve your vision without glasses or contact lenses. The most suitable treatment depends on your eye condition, the shape of your eyes, your age, and your lifestyle.

1. Laser Treatment (Femto-LASIK or Advanced PRK)
2. Implantable Contact Lens (ICL)
3. Lens Replacement (Clear Lens Exchange)

1. Laser Treatment

Conditions

- You are between **20 and 50 years old**.
- Your **eye prescription** has been stable for at least one year.
- Your prescription is between **+3 and -6 diopters** for myopia or hyperopia, and up to **4 diopters** for astigmatism.
- You are in **good general health**.

When is Laser Treatment not suitable (contraindications)?

1. During pregnancy or breastfeeding.
2. If you have had an eye inflammation or ocular herpes.
3. If you are using corticosteroids.
4. If you are diabetic.
5. If you suffer from a corneal disease, such as keratoconus.
6. If reading glasses are sufficient for seeing clearly.

For certain professions, such as the military, police, or aviation, specific vision requirements may apply. It is important to check beforehand whether treatment is allowed in your case.

Procedure

The treatment is done on an outpatient basis, meaning you can go home the same day. Both eyes are usually treated at the same time.

There is no need to fast, so you can eat and drink before the treatment. You will be given a sedative and anesthetic eye drops to make the treatment painless and comfortable.

The laser treatment lasts less than a minute per eye, during which you will look at a green light. We will keep your eye open using a small instrument, so you don't have to blink.

The entire process, including pre- and post-operative care, takes about half a day.

Post-operative Treatment

1. Eye drops according to the prescribed schedule

You will receive eye drops that you will need to use several times a day to ensure proper healing.

In case of pain, you can take paracetamol (maximum 1g 4 times per day).

2. Follow-up after the operation

1 day, 1 week, and 1 month after the treatment, your eyes will be checked. In the case of an implant, follow-up exams will also be done in the following years to monitor the cornea, the (implant) lens, and/or eye pressure.

If you experience problems after the operation, contact our secretariat at 02 477 68 75.

For urgent help, contact the emergency department at UZ Brussels Hospital at 02 477 51 01.

Post Care Instructions

1. Sleep with the clear **eye shell** given to you for the first 7 nights after the surgery to avoid rubbing your eyes.
2. **Avoid shampoo and soap** in your eyes during the first week and possibly wear swimming goggles while showering.
3. **No sunbed or sauna** for the first two weeks after the surgery.
4. **No water sports, ball games, or combat sports** during the first month.
5. Wear **sunglasses** on sunny days during the first month.
6. Use **artificial tears** during the first 3 months to help the cornea heal and prevent dryness or a sandy feeling in your eyes.

Two Types of Laser Treatments

There are two options, both of which are effective and safe but differ in how they are performed:

- Femto-LASIK (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis)
- Advanced PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy)

Femto-LASIK (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis)

Femto-LASIK is a common form of eye surgery to correct myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism. During the treatment, the surgeon creates a **thin circular flap** in the cornea using an extremely precise femtosecond laser. Then, an **excimer laser** is used to reshape the cornea so that the light focuses better on the retina. After the correction, the flap is replaced.

Advantages

- **Quick recovery time.** You will usually notice immediate improvement and can return to work after 2 days.
- **Minimal pain and discomfort after the treatment.**

Risks

Although LASIK is safe, complications may occasionally occur:

- **Under-correction or over-correction**, which can be adjusted.
- **Astigmatism**, which may sometimes not be corrected with glasses.
- **Infections and inflammations** under the flap.

These complications generally do not cause permanent damage.

Recovery Period

- **Dry eyes** may occur after the treatment, for which you can use artificial tears.
- You will generally **not be able to work for 2 days**.
- Your vision usually improves immediately after the treatment.

Price

The price of LASIK treatment for both eyes is 3500 euros.

Reimbursement by Health Insurance

Most health insurance funds reimburse between 100 and 150 euros per eye. Hospitalization insurance may, depending on the contract, cover part of the costs. Be sure to inquire about this before your treatment.

Advanced PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy)

In Advanced PRK, **the outer layer of the cornea** (the epithelium) is removed using a laser, after which the curvature of the corneal surface is **corrected**.

Finally, medication is applied to prevent scarring.

PRK is useful for people with thin corneas or other corneal diseases.

Advantages

- **No risk of flap complications**, as no flap is created in the cornea.
- **The laser does not touch the eye itself (no-touch technique)**.
- It is a **more affordable treatment** because only one type of laser is used.

Risks

Although PRK is safe, complications can sometimes occur:

- **Under or overcorrection**, which can be adjusted.
- **Astigmatism**, which may not be correctable with glasses.
- **Scarring** may develop on the cornea.

Recovery period

- After the treatment, you will wear **bandage lenses** for 5 days. These are contact lenses without prescription that help speed up the healing process.
- Your eyes may feel **painful** or **burning** for the first few days.
- Your eyes may feel (temporarily) dry. You can use artificial tears for this.
- Usually, you can **return to work after 5 days**.
- Vision improves gradually and is stable after 1 month.

Price

The price for a PRK treatment for both eyes is 2400 euros.

Reimbursement by Health Insurance

Most health insurance funds reimburse between 100 and 150 euros per eye. Hospitalization insurance may, depending on the contract, cover part of the costs. Be sure to inquire about this before your treatment.

2. Implantable Contact Lens (ICL)

During an ICL procedure, we place a lens between your iris and the natural lens of your eye. This is an alternative to laser treatments and can help correct both nearsightedness (myopia) and farsightedness (hypermetropia).

Lens Features

- **Biocompatibility:** The lens is made of collagen, which is well-tolerated by the eye.
- **Flexibility and comfort:** The lens is comfortable and provides a natural feel.
- **UV protection:** Without blocking visible light.

Conditions

- You are between **20 and 60 years old**.
- Your eye correction is between **-0.50 and -20.00 diopters** for myopia or **+0.50 and +10.00 diopters** for hyperopia.
- You have astigmatism between **0.50 and 6.00 diopters**.

Procedure

The treatment is performed on an outpatient basis, meaning you can go home the same day. Both eyes are usually treated at the same time.

There is no need to fast, so you can eat and drink before the treatment. You will receive a sedative and anesthetic eye drops to ensure the procedure is painless and comfortable.

A small device will hold your eye open, preventing you from blinking. The procedure lasts about 15 minutes per eye.

Afterward, you will stay at the hospital for 2 hours to check the eye pressure. The entire process, including pre- and post-care, takes about half a day.

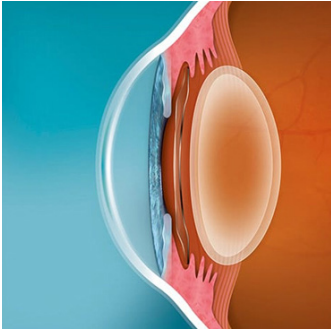
Benefits

- **Short recovery time:** Typically, you can return to work after a day.
- **Reversible:** The lens can be removed later if necessary.
- **Less pain and dryness than laser treatments.**
- **Suitable for patients with thin corneas:** People who are not candidates for laser treatment can often have an ICL implanted.
- **Future options preserved:** Since the shape of the cornea does not change, you can later opt for other lenses, such as premium multifocal implants.

Risks

Although ICL is safe, complications can occasionally occur:

- **Under-correction or over-correction**, which can be adjusted.
- **Increased sensitivity to light.**
- A **new treatment** with another lens may be necessary if the lens does not fit correctly.



Recovery Period

- Your eyes may be (temporarily) dry. You can use artificial tears to relieve this.
- You will generally be unable to work for 2 days.
- Vision recovers gradually. Initially, you may see halos (bright circles around light sources), but this usually disappears after two weeks.

Price

The price for ICL treatment for both eyes ranges from 3,680 to 5,150 euros, depending on the type of lens.

Reimbursement by Health Insurance

Most health insurance funds reimburse between 100 and 150 euros per eye. Hospitalization insurance may, depending on the contract, cover part of the costs. Be sure to inquire about this before your treatment.

3. Clear Lens Exchange

During a clear lens exchange, we replace the natural lens with an artificial one. This is a treatment for myopia, hypermetropia, and astigmatism.

Conditions

- You are at least **50 years** old.
- You are in good general health.

Benefits

- **Permanent solution:** You will no longer need glasses.
- **No risk of cataracts** (clouding of the lens), because we replace the natural lens.

When the treatment is not suitable (contraindications)

- **In case of dry eyes:** These must first be treated to make accurate measurements.
- In cases of **corneal, retinal diseases, or glaucoma.**

Procedure

The procedure is performed on an outpatient basis, meaning you can go home the same day. Both eyes are typically treated at the same time.

There is no need to fast, so you can eat and drink before the treatment.

You will receive a sedative and anesthetic drops to make the treatment painless and comfortable. A small device will hold your eye open, preventing you from blinking.

The procedure lasts about 15 minutes per eye. Afterward, you will stay at the hospital for 2 hours for an eye pressure check. The whole process, including pre- and post-care, takes about half a day.



Risks

- **Under-correction or over-correction**, which can be adjusted later.
- **Infection or swelling** of the cornea.
- The lens capsule may tear, **preventing the lens from being implanted.**
- Risk of **retinal detachment.**

Recovery Period

- You will generally be **unable to work for 5 days**.
- Your eyes may be (temporarily) **dry**. You can use artificial tears to relieve this.
- For 1 month, you will need to use **eye drops** to prevent inflammation.
- **Vision recovers gradually**. Initially, you may see halos (bright circles around light sources), but this generally disappears after a few months.

Price

The price for an EDOF (Extended Depth of Field) lens implanted in both eyes starts from 4,675 euros. The price for a multifocal lens implanted in both eyes starts from 5,000 euros.

Reimbursement by Health Insurance

Most health insurance funds reimburse between 100 and 150 euros per eye. Hospitalization insurance may, depending on the contract, cover part of the costs. Be sure to inquire about this before your treatment.

Choice of Implant Lens

1. EDOF Lens (Extended Depth of Field)

This lens improves your vision **for both distance and intermediate distances (66 cm)**. You may still need reading glasses occasionally. This lens has **fewer side effects** such as glare and halos (bright circles around light sources) compared to **multifocal lenses**.



2. Multifocal Implant Lens

This lens corrects your vision **for three distances**: far, intermediate (computer screen, car dashboard, tablet), and near (reading a book). You will no longer need glasses, even for reading. Contrast may slightly decrease, which may require more light for reading without glasses. You may initially see halos (bright circles around light sources), but these usually disappear after a few months.



The choice of implant lens will be discussed with you during the preliminary examination.

Team and Contact

Our expert team will guide you step by step. We will discuss the best treatment options based on your specific situation.

The Team

Dr. Termote is an experienced ophthalmologist, specializing in advanced techniques such as Femto-LASIK, advanced-PRK, ICL, or Clear Lens Exchange with premium lens implants. She has conducted scientific research on premium lens implants, corneal disorders and transplants.

Contact

Please contact us if you have questions or if you want to know which treatment is best for you. We will be happy to assist you!

CONTACT DETAILS Ophthalmology Department

Laarbeeklaan 101
1090 Jette
02 477 68 75
02 477 68 78
eyeclinic@uzbrussel.be

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Brussels Health Campus
Laarbeeklaan 101
1090 Jette
info@uzbrussel.be
www.uzbrussel.be