



Mimi Rogers won't gamble on vision

- By John Morgan, Spotlight Health, with medical adviser Stephen A. Shoop, M.D. – posted 1/23/2004

During her recent guest appearances on *Las Vegas* and *Celebrity Poker Challenge*, actress Mimi Rogers learned all about gambling. So when it came to correcting her near-sightedness, Rogers went 'all in' for a revolutionary new LASIK procedure.



Actress Mimi Rogers will next star in the feature film "The Door in the Floor" - Photo by Glen Weiner, ZUMA Press

"I've known about LASIK for a long time but when you've been as near-sighted as I have been all my life, the little vision you do have is very precious to you," Rogers says. "So while I wanted to do LASIK, I was also very nervous about it. Finally I got up the nerve to do it and the eye surgeon said I wasn't a good candidate."

Without the surgery, Rogers' 20-200 vision forced her to continue wearing glasses and disposable contact lenses. And while disappointed, she was also "extremely grateful" that the

doctor had not performed the procedure.

"He explained that I have very large pupils and that they dilate to nine millimeters — an amount that exceeded the six millimeter field of correction," Rogers states. "If I did LASIK, he said I would have terrible problems at night with halos and coronas."

Rogers had no idea about this complication of LASIK surgery caused when the pupil dilates beyond the laser-corrected zone of the cornea.

But Rogers' sister-in-law was not so lucky. Her surgeon went ahead with her LASIK procedure despite her having similarly over-sized pupils.

"Now she has had terrible problems and can't drive at night because of the halo problems are so bad," Rogers says.

After these two experiences, Rogers put LASIK surgery "way on the back burner." That is until she learned of a revolutionary new LASIK procedure pioneered by Beverly Hills eye surgeon Brian S. Boxer Wachler that is specifically designed to prevent glare and halo problems.

Vision of the future

Called a customized LASIK procedure with optical zone adjustment – or Anti-Halo LASIK — this technique measures the pupil size of each patient and matches the width of the laser zone to the

pupil size. Normal pupil size ranges from six millimeters to 6.5 millimeters. By adjusting the zone for larger pupils, Boxer Wachler reported in the *Journal of Ophthalmology* that the procedure was safer and more effective than traditional LASIK.

"Most lasers just treat with a limited number of zone sizes," explains Boxer Wachler, who is a board certified ophthalmologist and director of the Boxer Wachler Vision Institute. "Most of these zones are not very big. With the LADARVision laser I can custom program the circular zone or the width of that zone to fit each individual patient."

An estimated 1.5 million LASIK surgeries are now performed in the United States. While LASIK is typically not covered by insurance and can cost anywhere from \$1,000 to \$5,900, depending on the procedure and surgeon, monthly payment plans can be arranged for as low as \$100.

"This new procedure is actually quite underwhelming – it takes about five minutes," Boxer Wachler says. "The patient is given numbing drops so there is no pain at all. We make a flap in the cornea and apply the laser treatment, flattening the cornea. The flap is then replaced and it bonds without suturing."

Typically patients take the rest of the day off to rest, keeping their eyes closed. After a follow up visit the next morning, patients can immediately return to work.

Rogers said she noticed an immediate improvement.

"I sat up and instantly was able to read the clock," Rogers notes. "For me to read a clock on the wall without corrective lenses would have been impossible before. It's a little freaky at first because it takes your brain a little time to adjust to being able to see so well."

Not only could Rogers see perfectly, she experienced no glare or halo problems.

Best bet

While glare and halo is an infrequent complication, Rogers recommends that anyone considering LASIK surgery make sure they select a qualified, reputable ophthalmologist who examines you thoroughly before performing LASIK.

"The consultation exam should be very detailed," Rogers advises. "It took the most time – about two or three hours — because they did a lot of tests. I really appreciated that Dr. Boxer Wachler was very cautious and willing to turn me down if necessary."

And Boxer Wachler appreciated that Rogers knew the right questions to ask.

"Mimi is very intelligent and really took the time to educate herself about LASIK and the problems with glare and halos if you have large pupils," the expert says. "Patients need to educate themselves and research their choices."

Despite pupils that in moderate light would dilate to nine millimeters, Boxer Wachler was able to customize the optical zone size for Rogers and achieve "an excellent result."

"Mimi is now 20-20 both during the day and at night and has had no complications," Boxer Wachler states. "It is very rare to encounter glare and halo problems using this Anti-Halo procedure. My hope is that we can eliminate the problem altogether."

And Boxer Wachler believes that poor outcomes can be reduced significantly by doctors making sure that patients are good candidates for the LASIK procedure to begin with.

And the news is potentially even better for former-LASIK patients.

The new customized procedure can also treat astigmatism and more importantly, be used to correct glare and halo problems caused by previous LASIK surgery.

"My sister-in-law went in and got re-corrected by Dr. Boxer Wachler," Rogers says. "It takes about three months for the full healing to take place but after one month she said there was already a marked improvement in the halo problem. She's now driving at night and for her this is a miracle."

And Rogers' future is looking bright as well. The busy actress and mother of two will next star in the feature film *The Door in the Floor* opposite Jeff Bridges and Kim Basinger.

"And even better I now have really good vision and don't have to worry about taking out my lenses or losing my glasses any more," she says.