

# SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Media Contact: Staishy Bostick Siem

214-648-3404

[staishy.siem@utsouthwestern.edu](mailto:staishy.siem@utsouthwestern.edu)

## NEW LASER VISION CORRECTIVE SURGERY OFFERS ADVANCED CUSTOM TREATMENT

DALLAS – Feb. 18, 2003 – Ophthalmologists at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas have begun using the newest technology in laser eye surgery, which promises to give patients better vision than traditional laser surgeries and make more people candidates for procedures.

UT Southwestern received Alcon's new LADARWave CUSTOMCORNEA machine in early February and is one of the first medical centers in the country to use the new technology, which was approved by the Food and Drug Administration in October. The machine – located in the Laser Center for Vision at Zale Lipshy University Hospital – is one of only two in the Dallas area and about 15 nationwide.

“This will introduce a completely new era in keratorefractive surgery,” said Dr. James McCulley, chairman of ophthalmology and director of the Jean H. & John T. Walter Jr. Center for Research in Age-Related Macular Degeneration.

Doctors can now take detailed measurements of the entire eye – from front to back – and evaluate all factors affecting a patient's vision. Such comprehensive measurements are not possible with older technology. Doctors are also able to detect eye aberrations, or abnormalities, that older technology would have missed, making it easier to determine whether a patient is a candidate for surgery.

The information is used to develop a custom treatment, which is programmed into a computer-operated laser that performs the surgery.

Preliminary data shows that the technology allows more patients to have 20/20 vision, said Dr. Dwight Cavanagh, vice chairman of ophthalmology and associate dean for clinical services. The technology could also help treat patients who may not have been candidates for other corrective surgeries or those who may have had problems from previous procedures.

Healing and recovery time is a few days – the same as with most other laser corrective surgeries.

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