

'Now My Eyesight is Unbelievable'

"They give you a little bit of medication to relax you. You feel no pain; just a bit of pressure. And in ten minutes, the whole thing is over with. I'd do it again in a heartbeat. It's really no big deal. Of course, the big deal is the improvement in vision you get from the lenses the doctor puts in to correct the astigmatism and to clear up the cataracts.

"Dr. Wan performed miracles with these toric lens (implants). Now, my eyesight is unbelievable..."

—Patient David Price talking about his recent cataract surgery

Toric Lens Implants Were the Answer

David Price had been wearing glasses for almost 40 years. He had astigmatism, the common condition that causes blurred vision, due to an irregular shape of the cornea. That was complicated by presbyopia, the naturally-occurring difficulty in focusing up close after about age 40.

During the last ten years of his professional life, he needed trifocals to do his work as a corporate financial officer. "The year before I had the surgery, my eyesight really started to go downhill, primarily, I believe, because of the cataracts," he recalls. "And the astigmatism was not getting any better. The glare made it almost impossible to drive at night. I would have to be changing the power in my glasses lenses every six months. It was a pain."

He first met Dr. Lee Wan, Coastal Eye Medical Director, in 2008 when he was referred for treatment of a chronic infection of the eyes and eyelids. Dr. Wan worked with him for quite a while to get him to the point where his eyes were comfortable once again. It was at that point that Mr. Price decided to address his cataracts, which had been affecting his vision all along.

Dr. Wan felt that presbyopic lens implants (for near, intermediate and distance vision) could be used, but that would have required a second procedure, laser vision correction, to correct the astigmatism. It turned out that Mr. Price was not a good candidate for laser vision correction. So Dr. Wan decided the best course would be to correct the astigmatism, aiming for good distance vision without glasses. Mr. Price agreed, and in December, 2009 and January 2010 Dr. Wan performed cataract surgery, using toric intraocular lens implants, specifically designed to correct astigmatism.

Mr. Price says the results are spectacular. "Ninety-five percent of the time or more, I don't have to wear glasses. I drive without them and can see freeway signs a long way off. My night vision is perfect. Colors are so much brighter."

He can read the computer without glasses, but if he has to read for any length of time, he uses reading glasses with a mild correction.

Toric lens implants are considered "specialty" lenses since they not only replace the old cataract, but also allow the surgeon to correct the vision at the same time. (While insurance does not cover the additional cost of these specialty implants, medical insurance generally will help with the other expenses associated with cataract surgery.) For Mr. Price, the investment in the implants was well worth it. "If you have astigmatism and torics would work for you, go for it," he advises. "These lenses do marvelous things for your vision."

Mr. Price is pleased with the care he has received. "Dr. Wan is an exceptional physician," he says, "so I was in good hands. The staff are all very friendly and nice. I like the office very much."

Not long ago, Mr. Price was reminiscing about the bad old days when he had to wear trifocal glasses. He recalls restoring a rare 1970 Lincoln, working under the hood on humid days. His glasses would fog up as he was trying to look through the different levels of his trifocals. "It was really a pain," he says. "And not having to wear glasses today

is a real joy, I'll tell you."

Mr. Price is retired from a 35-year career with Rockwell International. Following his retirement, he worked in the Kinko's head office for two years, and later as a financial consultant. He and his wife enjoy traveling and visiting with their adult children and grandchildren.