

## **New Staar Implantable Lens for Nearsightedness Available at Dougherty Laser Vision**

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### **First Bilateral Implant of FDA-Approved Visian ICL to Be Performed January 13<sup>th</sup>**

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Dougherty Laser Vision -- one of Southern California's leading centers for vision correction research -- is the first surgery center in the Western U.S. to offer the newly FDA-approved Staar Visian ICL (Implantable Collamer Lens) for treating nearsightedness.

The first bilateral (two-eyes) implant of the Visian ICL in the United States following the FDA's December 23rd approval of the lens will be performed on Friday, January 13th at Dougherty Laser Vision's Los Angeles surgery center. Dougherty Laser Vision serves as a principal training center for ophthalmologists seeking to become certified in using the new lens. The first unilateral (single eye) implant of the ICL was performed earlier this week in Wisconsin.

Intended specifically for patients with moderate to severe nearsightedness (myopia that requires -3 to -20 diopters of correction), the Visian ICL is designed to provide a permanent alternative to glasses/contact lenses, earlier-generation lens implants and LASIK surgery. Procedures such as LASIK, which correct vision by reshaping the cornea, may be considered ill-suited for treating the estimated 34 million Americans with three or more diopters of nearsightedness.

"The new Staar Visian ICL can provide nearsighted patients with many advantages over other available treatment options," said Medical Director Paul J. Dougherty, M.D. "The medical and aesthetic benefits of this state-of-the-art lens are truly remarkable."

Made of Staar's proprietary, highly biocompatible Collamer material, the Visian ICL can be folded in a manner that allows implantation with an incision up to 50 percent smaller than competing technology. This surgical benefit may allow for a faster recovery of vision, as well as a reduced risk of inducing astigmatism, which can be a byproduct of earlier generation lens implants for nearsightedness. The Visian lens has what is described as "shape memory," which allows it to be folded into a tiny roll, inserted through an incision just 3 millimeters in length and then unfolded once it is in the eye.

The unique design also allows the lens to be positioned beneath the iris (colored part of the eye), which minimizes risk to the cornea (the clear window in the front of the eye responsible for bending light into focus). The small incision and posterior lens placement combine to provide highly predictable outcomes, while making the lens virtually undetectable to observers. The Visian ICL is designed to remain in the eye permanently, but can be removed or exchanged if a patient's vision changes.

"The ICL's unique foldable design makes it the only minimally invasive lens of its kind approved in the U.S.," added Dr. Dougherty. "The fact that it does not alter the natural shape of the eye means that it has the potential to provide better quality of vision than procedures such as LASIK, especially for patients with higher prescriptions."

The Visian ICL is the result of nearly 15 years of development and international testing. It has been implanted in more than 40,000 eyes worldwide, and is currently approved for use in 41 nations (including the European Union).

While the lens was approved by the Food and Drug Administration on December 23rd, it will not be available widely in the U.S. until early April.

Dr. Dougherty has implanted the Staar Visian ICL internationally and on an investigational basis in the U.S. for more than six years. He served as a principal investigator for the three-year U.S. clinical trial, and is one of a small handful of surgeons in the U.S. currently trained and certified to implant the lens

prior to its commercial release. In addition, Dougherty Laser Vision serves as host to the first post-FDA approval ICL training course for U.S. surgeons. The training course, which will be attended by 40-50 refractive surgeons from across the U.S., will be held on Friday, January 13th at Dougherty Laser Vision's Los Angeles surgery center.

Nearsightedness (myopia) is an error of visual focusing that makes distant objects appear blurred. Like farsightedness (hyperopia) and astigmatism, it is a common refractive error that occurs when the shape of the eye does not bend (i.e. refract) light correctly. Nearsightedness usually develops during childhood, as the eyeball grows too long, and therefore focuses light from distant objects in front of, rather than on, the retina. Nearsightedness affects about one in four people (about 73 million Americans).