

Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth

Refractive Surgery Center

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Contact:

Phone (757) 953-7575 / option 3

Fax (757) 953-6136

Hours:

Mon - Fri: 0645 - 1545

Sat - Sun: CLOSED

RESOURCES

- [Policy 08-0081 Deploy After Refractive Surgery](#) dated 10 Jun 08
- [Policy Guidance LASIK](#) dated 18 Dec 08
- [NMCP Refractive surgery policy guidelines](#)
- [Aeromedical Reference and Waiver Guide \(Web page\)](#)
- [Aeromedical Reference and Waiver Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- [Navy Warfighter Refractive Surgery Consult Form](#)

RELATED SERVICES: Specialty Clinics & Depts.[Ophthalmology Clinic](#)

Our mission is to provide state-of-the-art surgical vision correction to active duty Armed Forces personnel, with emphasis on visual performance enhancement for the warfighter. We improve operational readiness and safety by eliminating the need for glasses and contact lenses.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How can I access Refractive Surgery Center (RSC) services?

You can submit a "[Navy Warfighter Refractive Surgery Consult Form](#)" to the RSC by fax. The consult form will be completed by you, your vision care provider, and your unit commander. The form contains the NMC Portsmouth RSC fax number and address as well as those of the other Navy refractive surgery centers.

2. Did you get my consult?

You will receive a confirmation email in approximately 2 weeks from the day that you submitted it. We may receive hundreds of consults during that time, and they take time to process. Please refrain from contacting us to see if we received your consult until at least 4 weeks have passed from the date you faxed/mailed or hand delivered your consult to the RSC.

3. I sent my consult more than 4 weeks ago and still have not received a confirmation email.

Much of the RSC communication with you will be via email; therefore it is critical that we have a current, valid email address that you check frequently. The RSC cannot contact you if you left your email address blank, if your writing was not legible or if the address was incomplete. Additionally, you MUST complete all 3 sections of information on the consult (including your FULL social security number and date of birth), or it will be rejected. Before contacting the RSC, check your consult form for completeness and resubmit it if necessary. Please also ensure that a current telephone number is included on the form.

4. When can I have surgery?

Refractive Surgery is an elective procedure intended to enhance warfighter vision capabilities. Surgery is not guaranteed for everyone. The number of consults we receive for all Priority levels is unpredictable and the number of surgery slots available can vary from month to month. The wait for Refractive surgery at all military facilities is lengthy for most applicants and cannot be predicted for individuals. There are several factors that influence patient selection, including the date of your consult submission and your availability for adequate post-surgical follow-up. However, surgery is offered primarily based upon your Priority Level which is assigned by definition of your operation requirements. Priority Level 1 patients ALWAYS have priority booking over Priorities 2-4. Additionally, you cannot be accepted as a candidate for refractive surgery if you have less than 1 year of Active Duty or Reserve FTS obligation remaining from your prospective date of surgery (not the date that you submitted your consult).

5. Can I make/schedule an appointment for surgery?

If your consult meets the administrative criteria above, in most all cases you will be contacted by email to schedule a Screening Appointment when your name comes to the top of the list. You will be provided a health history questionnaire to complete and hand carry to the appointment. The screening test is a cornea exam with a Technician and takes about 10 minutes; you should not expect to see a Provider at this visit. Following the screening, you may find out the results while you are here or contacted shortly after with the results. There are many reasons why someone may not be a good candidate for refractive surgery. Those who do not pass the screening are usually informed by the Provider while you are in the clinic. Those who pass the screening will be scheduled first available, based on their Priority Level and the surgery schedule, for Pre-Op, Consent, and Surgery appointments. We will make every effort to contact you, but it is your responsibility to ensure that your contact information is current so that we can reach you.

6. Can I check on my "status"?

If you have received a confirmation email that we received your faxed consult, your consult has been entered into our database --please see questions #4 and #5 for guidance. If you have not received a confirmation email, see questions #2 and #3.

7. I need to update my consult information, how do I do that?

If you are deployed or if any of your information changes, including your duty station, please notify us via email to: usn.hampton-roads.navhospvorsva.list.NMCP-Eye-LaserSurgery@mail.mil so we can update your file.

8. Why did my shipmate get in before me when I submitted my consult first?

Most often it is due to their assigned Priority Level; however, sometimes patients are selected based on their prescription, availability, and our ability to contact candidates. If a Priority Level 1 candidate submits a consult today, he or she will have priority over any Priority Level 2, 3 or 4 who has previously submitted a consult, even if that consult was submitted several months to several years ago. Even though there may be a large number of Priority Level 2 candidates waiting, a percentage of appointments are held for Priority Level 3 and 4 candidates to provide access, but those candidates will typically have a longer wait.

9. What is my number on the waiting list?

We do not have a "waiting list". A waiting list suggests that everyone who submits a consult will get surgery. Not everyone who submits a consult will be selected for surgery. Please see question #4 for further guidance. Because consults of varying Priority Levels are received in the RSC daily, it is not possible to accurately estimate how long any given person will have to wait before being contacted to schedule an appointment.

10. What are Priority Level definitions and who assigns my Priority Level?

A detailed description of each of the Priority Levels can be found on the second page of your consult form here: [Navy Warfighter Refractive Surgery Consult Form](#). It is the responsibility of your Commanding Officer/Unit Commander to review this guidance and provide an informed Priority Level assignment.

11. Do you treat dependents and retirees?

Refractive surgery for dependents and retirees is not offered at the Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and not a covered benefit in the network.

12. I was deployed/changed duty stations; did I lose "my number in line" for surgery?

Remember, there is no "waiting list" for surgery. Information from your consult is entered into a database, and we use this database to select our patients for refractive surgery. Patients are primarily selected by using the Priority Level. Make sure that the RSC has your current contact information to ensure that we are able to contact you if your consult is selected.

13. I am changing my duty station, can you forward my consult to the nearest military refractive surgery center?

Please contact the Refractive surgery center closest to your new duty station to inquire how to submit a consult to them. If they will accept a copy of the form in our database, and you do not have a copy, our staff will be happy to provide you with one upon request.

14. Can I get treated by a civilian, and if I do, can I do my follow ups with any military refractive surgery center?

If you are on flight status, you CANNOT have surgery by a civilian provider. Please see Section 12.15, "Corneal Refractive Surgery" in the Ophthalmology section of the Navy Medicine Aeromedical Waiver Reference Guide:

➤ [Aeromedical Reference and Waiver Guide \(Web page\)](#)

If you are not on flight status and would like to have surgery by a civilian provider, it is recommended you review your situation with a military eye care provider by making an eye exam appointment prior to making any commitments. Remember, it is your responsibility to get written permission from your Commanding Officer or Unit Commander to have this elective procedure performed by a civilian provider. Follow-up care may not be available at a military RSC; therefore, your civilian provided surgery is at your own expense and risk.

15. I got treated by a civilian and need a "follow up" or a "touch up". Can you do this for me?

You will need to return to your civilian provider for your "follow up" or "touch up." It is recommended you review your situation with a military vision care provider by scheduling an eye exam appointment prior to making any commitments.

16. I want to be considered for Refractive Surgery, where do I start?

Any military optometry department can help you get started. Please contact them directly to schedule an appointment to initiate a refractive surgery consult. You can either print a form from this website or get one directly from them. Either way, it is your responsibility to fax the completed form to the number listed on the bottom of the consult or mail it in. Remember to fill it out clearly so we can input the information in our database and send you a confirmation email.

Consult can be found at the following links:

For aviation: [Aeromedical Reference and Waiver Guide \(Web Page\)](#)

For non aviation: [General Consult](#)

17. On my consult form, what is meant by “sponsor social security #”?

This is the active duty member’s social security number.

18. Do you treat members of other services?

Yes, if they have submitted a Navy Refractive Surgery Consult and are within our geographical treatment area.

19. Other Navy Refractive Surgery Centers: For information about Refractive Surgery at other Navy Centers, please browse the following links:

WEST COAST

EAST COAST

CALIFORNIA

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

[Main](#) | [Ophthalmology](#)

MARYLAND

National Naval Medical Center /

Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda

[Main](#) | [Ophthalmology](#)

VIRGINIA

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth

[Main](#) | [Ophthalmology](#)

WASHINGTON

Naval Hospital Bremerton

[Main](#)

NORTH CAROLINA

Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune

[Main](#)

FLORIDA

Naval Hospital Jacksonville

[Main](#) |

From the FDA Website Regarding Refractive Surgery

<http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/SurgeryandLifeSupport/LASIK/ucm061254.htm>

<http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ProductsandMedicalProcedures/SurgeryandLifeSupport/LASIK/ucm061325.htm>

Other Important Links for Reference (requires CAC Login)

Navy Knowledge Online: Search “Refractive Surgery”

[NKO](#)