



Phototherapeutic Keratectomy

Phototherapeutic Keratectomy (PTK) is an excimer laser surgical procedure that removes roughness or cloudiness from the cornea. The cornea is the smooth clear window of the eye in front of the colored iris that helps bend light rays so they focus directly on the retina, the light-sensing layer of cells at the back of the eye. If the corneal surface is rough or cloudy, the rays of light do not focus properly on the retina and images are blurry. Sometimes an irregular corneal surface can cause recurring eye pain.

In the past, a rough cornea was scraped smooth with a surgical blade, while a cloudy cornea required a partial or full cornea transplant. More recently, PTK, is an option for these conditions.

The excimer laser allows some abnormal corneas to be treated with a cool beam of light that evaporates tissue. The principal advantage of laser surgery over conventional surgery is the laser is able to create a smoother corneal surface than a blade and smaller amounts of tissue can be removed.