

TAMANG SAGOT

PhilHealth Circular No. 028-2014

Suspension of Reimbursement For Lasik (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis) Procedures

1. What is Keratomileusis or L.A.S.I.K.?

It is a laser procedure that flattens the cornea and is the most common laser surgery for correcting nearsightedness and astigmatism. L.A.S.I.K. is an outpatient procedure that is usually safe enough to be performed under local anesthesia even in an ophthalmologist's office. The operation on one eye takes about as short as 10 minutes.

2. What will happen if the patient does not undergo L.A.S.I.K.?

According to Ophthalmologists, the patient may need to wear prescription eyeglasses to correct his or her nearsightedness and astigmatism.

3. What is the reason of suspension of reimbursement of L.A.S.I.K.?

The Corporation has yet to be presented with sufficient compelling reason, based on clinical data, why the procedure should continue to be reimbursed.

4. From whom does PhilHealth expect to receive compelling data to continue to reimburse L.A.S.I.K.?

The data, whether to consider the inclusion of LASIK in the development of future benefit packages or not, will come from the appropriate specialty society/ies. They will have to show based on evidence that any procedure should be prioritized over others with regards to its compensability by the Corporation. Any submitted data shall have to be reviewed, evaluated and validated to guide the future direction of this policy.

5. When is the effectivity of the circular?

This circular shall take effect fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of publication in any newspaper of general circulation. L.A.S.I.K. procedures done on the date of effectivity onwards shall no longer be reimbursed by PhilHealth until further notice.

6. What about the claims for Radial Keratotomy and Keratoplasty because like LASIK they are also performed for refractive error compensation?

They shall be processed and may be reimbursed subject to the existing rules of PhilHealth.