



After Dr. Ikuko Toda (left), managing director of the Minamiaoyama Eye Clinic, performed LASIK surgery on Carlo Zambotto (right), Japan representative for Automobili Lamborghini, his enjoyment of books, colors and driving racing cars has dramatically improved.

Seeing Is Believing

Minamiaoyama Eye Clinic

Carlo Zambotto got his first pair of eyeglasses when he was six years old, on his second day of school. The previous morning, he had been unable to read the blackboard from his seat. Over the next 38 years, his vision deteriorated to the point where he could not read a book just a couple of centimeters from his face without his spectacles.

Today, after a simple procedure that took less than 10 minutes, Mr. Zambotto can indulge in his favorite pastimes without the need for eyewear – be it playing sports, admiring a beautiful view or indulging in his passion for driving, which is especially convenient as he is the Japan representative for Automobili Lamborghini.

“It has definitely changed my life,” observes Mr. Zambotto, who hails from the romantic Italian city of Verona. “Nearly 40 years with glasses and contact lenses were enough for me. Now, taking part in sports is different, colors are brighter, the details of things that I can see a long way away are so sharp and beautiful. And I no longer have to wear glasses when I get behind the wheel for my hobby of driving on racing circuits.”

For this transformation, Mr. Zambotto says he owes a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Ikuko Toda, founder and managing director of the Minamiaoyama Eye Clinic.

“The technology to carry out refractive surgery was originally developed in the United States about 20 years ago, and we opened the first certified LASIK surgery clinic in Japan nine years ago,” explains Dr. Toda, who specialized in eye surgery at Tsukuba University, Jikei University and Keio University before spending three years at Harvard University.

She has carried out around 6,000 corrective operations; and the growing popularity of the procedure – actress Yoko Saito says the quality of her life has improved dramatically since undergoing the operation – has encouraged the Minamiaoyama Eye Clinic to open branches in Yokohama and Fukuoka in recent years.

Essentially, the procedure involves administering an anesthetic to the eye with drops, incising a flap on the outer layer of the eye and using an excimer laser to reshape the cornea before replacing the flap. In contrast to earlier, more

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LASIK eye surgery is simple, painless and quick – with life-changing results. This picture shows a follow-up procedure to check that the patient’s eyes stay in perfect condition.



Dr. Ikuko Toda has performed about 6,000 LASIK surgeries, and her clinic about 40,000.

rudimentary operations, this operation is completed rapidly, no stitches are required and the eye simply heals itself.

“After the procedure is completed, the patient’s vision is blurred, although it is good enough to take a train home, for example,” says Dr. Toda. “There is no pain, although sometimes minor irritation, and we recommend that people go home and take a nap for a couple of hours. When they wake up, they have clear vision and no discomfort.”

Many of Dr. Toda’s patients play a lot of sports, which is hampered by having to wear glasses, while others are unable to wear contact lenses for medical reasons. Another key motivation is the cosmetic improvement in doing away with spectacles, she adds, with models, celebrities and television newscasters being among her patients.

“There are many advantages to LASIK surgery: it works out to be less expensive over the long term than frequently replacing contact lenses; the procedure can be completed for both eyes at the same time; and, because of the rapid recovery rate, busy people need not take time off from work,” she says.

Like many other patients, Mr. Zambotto first visited Dr. Toda’s tranquil-atmosphere clinic on the recommendation of friends.

“Of course, I was a little concerned about the procedure when I first arrived; but from everything I had heard beforehand, I was very confident in Dr. Toda and her team,” he says. “The procedure lasted a very short time, it was virtually painless and everything was very smooth – there is absolutely no comparison to a visit with your dentist.”

Like all patients, Mr. Zambotto is presently undergoing a

series of follow-up checks to ensure that his eyes remain in perfect condition.

“Before, when I woke up in the morning, I had to put my glasses on to even look at the clock to see what time it was,” he says. “When I wore a helmet to go driving on the racing circuits, my glasses would steam up. I can read a book and watch television now. The difference is incredible.”



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