Eye Surgeons Comment on AMO/Intralase Merger

Leading Lasik surgeons agree that the sale of the no-blade laser company Intralase (ILSE) to Lasik blades manufacturer American Medical Optics (AMO) confirms the superiority of All-Laser Lasik procedures. AMO is giving up its blade manufacturing and pays $808 million to acquire their competitor, Intralase.

New York, NY (PRWEB) January 14, 2007 -- It was announced on Monday that the boards of two of the major Lasik companies have agreed to merge: American Medical Optics will acquire Intralase for $808 Million. AMO has been in the eye care field for many years furnishing contact lenses, eye pharmaceuticals, as well as cataract instruments. AMO was spun off from Allergan in 2002 and quickly entered the Lasik field by buying up Visx, the first and major Lasik company. The manufacturer benefits not only from the sale of the laser but also every time the laser is used on an eye - a royalty fee is paid by the doctors. Visx has about 60% of the Lasik market. Now AMO will have the Intralase system that performs the first step of Lasik. AMO also has marketed a microkeratome with which the first step of Lasik was performed, however the "blade" was the principle cause of complications before the all-laser technique.

About five years ago, Intralase, a start-up laser company from California put a laser on the market that performed the first step of Lasik in a more precise and safer manner than previous blades. Intralase had a great deal of difficulty getting the surgeons to buy and use the laser. Only the more prominent surgeons evaluated it for the first couple of years, surgeons such as Dr. Christenberry, Dr. Dello Russo and Dr. Nordan - the more successful surgeons, in general. Dr. Joseph Dello Russo became convinced of the safety of the laser and ordered two machines which were delivered on Feb. 2002. "After the second day of using the Intralase, I never used a blade again."

But doctors who were not familiar with the laser were very reluctant to accept it, because they doubted that it would be safer and mostly because it was so expensive to buy (about $450,000) and use - paying royalties of about $160 per eye. Dr. Dello Russo says that "it took about two solid years before the laser began to catch on and its safety was recognized. Once the superiority of the all-laser was proven, the decision to buy was only hindered by the cost." Nowadays, five years later, "it is to be considered the standard of care", says Dr. Christenberry.

This acquisition by AMO has a medical reinforcing effect on all-laser Lasik. AMO gave up its blade industry and is putting all into what has proven to be a near perfect operation. Recent studies has shown that a well performed Lasik is safer than wearing contact lenses. "This acquisition is an affirmation of the safety of all-laser Lasik," says Dr. Dello Russo, "It shows how safe Lasik should be when it is properly done with an all-laser Lasik."

To receive additional information and to schedule interviews with Dr. Dello Russo, please contact Stephanie Waterman at (212) 722-9200 ext. 250 or at www.drdellorusso.com

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Contact Information
Stephanie Waterman
Dello Russo Laser Vision
http://www.drdellorusso.com
(212) 722-9200

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