



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VALLEY EYE ASSOCIATES OFFERS BREAKTHROUGH TREATMENT FOR PATIENTS WITH CATARACTS AND ASTIGMATISM

Appleton Eye Surgeon First in Northeast Wisconsin to Surgically Implant New Lens

APPLETON, WI – September 8, 2006—A staggering 20.5 million Americans age 40 and older have cataracts. Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness worldwide, but in most cases vision loss from cataracts is reversible. In the past, life without reading glasses or bifocals was simply not an option for cataract patients after surgery. A breakthrough treatment option, the new Alcon AcrySof® Toric Intraocular Lens (IOL) corrects pre-existing corneal astigmatism, reducing the dependence on glasses to improve vision after cataract surgery. Michael P. Vrabec, M.D., FACS a board certified Ophthalmologist with Valley Eye Associates is the first physician in Northeast Wisconsin to implant the new lens.

Approved by the FDA in September 2005, the AcrySof Toric implant (IOL) is a modification of the AcrySof single-piece (IOL), which is the most widely used implant in the world – with 25 million being implanted to date. It combines the safety and successful outcomes of traditional cataract surgery with the new technology so patients can regain their visual freedom. According to Dr. Vrabec, “More and more patients who come to see us for cataract surgery want to see better without glasses. Now with one operation we can correct several refractive problems.”

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Used in adult patients, the new artificial lens is implanted in the eye to restore vision after a clouded natural lens (cataract) is removed. Constructed of soft plastic that can be folded prior to insertion, the lens is convex on both sides (biconvex) to allow placement through an incision smaller than the optic diameter of the lens. It is intended to be positioned in the posterior chamber of the eye, replacing the natural lens. This position allows the lens to correct visual impairment of the aphakia (absence of the natural lens). After surgical insertion in the eye, the lens gently unfolds to restore vision.

Previous intraocular lens technology provided only one focal point – distance – leaving patients dependent upon reading glasses or bifocals. The AcrySof Toric lens design results in highly predictable visual outcomes. It has the ability to consistently offer improved vision at a range of distances.

Approximately 1.5 million cataract surgeries are performed a year. Cataract surgery remains the most frequently performed surgery in the U.S. and is one of the safest. People age 60 or older should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years. In addition to cataract, your eye care professional should check for signs of age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and other vision disorders. Early treatment for many eye disorders may save your sight.

About Valley Eye

For decades, Valley Eye Associates has been the premier choice for total vision healthcare in Northeast Wisconsin. The group specializes in a wide range of surgical and non-surgical treatments that include corneal transplantation, refractive surgery, cataract surgery, diabetic eye disease, macular degeneration and glaucoma. For more information on the Alcon AcrySof Toric lens or to make an appointment with one of the physicians visit www.valleyeye.com or call (920) 734-4361 or toll-free 1-800-344-4443.

About Alcon

Alcon, Inc. is the world's leading eye care company with sales exceeding \$3.9 billion in 2004. The company is dedicated to the ophthalmic industry by developing, manufacturing and marketing pharmaceuticals, surgical equipment and devices, contact lens solutions and other vision care products that treat diseases, disorders and other conditions of the eye.

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