

*Columbus Ophthalmology Associates*  
**KERATOCONUS**

**What is keratoconus?**

The cornea is the clear front window that helps bend the light rays and focus them through the pupil. Keratoconus is a rare condition in which the cornea becomes distorted and shaped like a cone. This can cause interference with proper focusing of the light rays and can distort the vision.

**What is the cause of keratoconus?**

The cause of keratoconus is unknown. Keratoconus has no known cure and many patients are unaware they have it because it begins as simple nearsightedness and astigmatism. It is a progressive disorder that can affect the way a patient sees the world by affecting simple tasks, such as driving, watching television or even reading,

**What are the symptoms of keratoconus?**

Symptoms of keratoconus usually start in the twenties or thirties. It can slowly progress and in the early stages, vision may only be affected slightly. As the cornea becomes more and more distorted, vision becomes increasingly blurred.

**What are treatment options for keratoconus?**

Mild and early cases are treated most often with specially fitted rigid gas perm contact lenses. The contact is fit over the steep cone-like cornea to correct for the irregularities. This will help bend the light rays more normally. Sometimes, the cornea can be distorted enough that a contact lens can no longer be worn. Other times, scarring may develop which may significantly decrease vision.

In these cases a corneal transplant is necessary to improve the vision. In this procedure, the distorted and diseased cornea is replaced with donor tissue. Over 90% of corneal transplants are successful, with the majority of patients obtaining vision of 20/40 or better afterward, with the aid of glasses or contact lenses.

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