

Columbus Ophthalmology Associates
PINGUECULUM AND PTERYGIUM

What is a pingueculum?

A pingueculum is a yellow patch or bump on the white of the eye, often seen on the side towards the nose. This is not a tumor, but a deposit of protein and scar tissue. This is often seen in patients who spend time exposed to the sun. Ultra-violet light and irritation can cause a pingueculum to grow. Most often these deposits are cosmetic, but they can interfere with contact lens wear. If repeatedly irritated, a pingueculum can become swollen and red.

What is a pterygium?

A pterygium is an extensive growth of conjunctiva on the cornea, the clear window in the front of the eye. A pterygium can grow large enough to interfere with vision and cause astigmatism. This is especially common when it starts to cover the area in front of the pupil. A pterygium can be found in patients who spend a great deal of time outdoors.

Treatment begins with eye drops or ointments to reduce inflammation. If the pterygium starts to cross the pupil and affect sight, then surgical removal is necessary.

Protecting the eyes from excessive ultra-violet light with UV absorbing sunglasses helps further reduce the risk for pterygiums and pingueculums.

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