Astigmatism

Astigmatism is related to the shape of the clear front surface of the eye (*cornea*). It is not a disease. The normal cornea is curved evenly like the surface of a ball. The cornea bends the light to the same degree in all directions. In astigmatism, the cornea is shaped more like a football and bends light in one direction more than another. This results in blurred vision.

Astigmatism can happen in one or both eyes. It can be worse in one eye more than the other, and may also happen with near-sightedness (*myopia*) or far-sightedness (*hyperopia*).

CAUSE

- Irregular shape of the surface of the cornea in an otherwise normal eye.
- Weakness in the tissue layers of the cornea causing a cone-shaped bubble to develop (*keratoconus*).
- Scars from trauma or clouding of the cornea due to corneal disease.

SYMPTOMS

- Blurred vision.
- Pain in the eye if due to corneal disease.

DIAGNOSIS

An optometrist or ophthalmologist can make a diagnosis with an exam and tests using a series of lenses in front of the eye and the eye reading charts.

TREATMENT

- Astigmatism can be treated with glasses or contact lenses.
- Laser treatments to change the shape of the cornea.

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