

What is Astigmatism?



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Astigmatism is a common eye condition that causes blurred vision. It occurs when the cornea, the clear, dome-shaped front part of the eye, is not perfectly round. This causes light to bend (refract) unevenly as it enters the eye, resulting in blurred or distorted vision.

What Causes Astigmatism?

Astigmatism is usually present at birth, but it can also develop later in life. The exact cause of astigmatism is unknown, but it is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

Symptoms of Astigmatism

- Blurred or distorted vision at all distances
- Difficulty seeing fine details, such as letters on a page or the lines on a chalkboard
- Eyestrain or fatigue
- Headaches
- Squinting or tilting the head to see more clearly

Diagnosis of Astigmatism

Astigmatism is diagnosed during a comprehensive eye exam. The doctor will use a variety of tests to measure the shape of the cornea and the amount of astigmatism.

Treatment for Astigmatism

There are several treatment options for astigmatism, including eyeglasses, contact lenses, and surgery.

- **Eyeglasses:** Eyeglasses with cylindrical lenses can correct astigmatism. Cylindrical lenses bend light in one direction more than the other, which helps to focus light more evenly on the retina.
- **Contact lenses:** Contact lenses can also correct astigmatism. Toric contact lenses are specially designed for people with astigmatism. They have a different shape than regular contact lenses, which helps to focus light more evenly on the retina.
- **Surgery:** Laser eye surgery (LASIK and PRK) can also be used to correct astigmatism. Laser eye surgery reshapes the cornea so that light is focused more evenly on the retina.

Living with Astigmatism

Most people with astigmatism can live normal, active lives. With the right treatment, people with astigmatism can have clear, comfortable vision.