

Keratoconus

Corneo-Plastic Unit

What is Keratoconus?

The word Keratoconus is formed by two Greek words: *kerato*, meaning cornea, and *konos*, meaning cone. Keratoconus is a condition in which the shape of the cornea, which is usually round, is distorted, developing a cone-shaped bulge, resulting in harm to vision.

Progression of the condition depends on the patient's age at the time of the onset. The earlier the onset, the faster keratoconus progresses. The condition is always bilateral and asymmetric – meaning that it affects both eyes; but one eye may be more affected than the other.

What causes Keratoconus?

Keratoconus is an inherited condition that sometimes skips generations. Its onset is usually during puberty and is often related to allergies (hay fever, asthma and eczema). The cornea is a bit more elastic than normal and tends to alter in shape and thin out, becoming cone shaped. Rubbing the eyes can make the condition worse.

How is Keratoconus treated?

There are several treatment options available depending on the severity of the condition:

- **Wearing glasses** - In the early stages, wearing glasses with correction for astigmatism can be used.
- **Contact lenses** - As the condition evolves, the increase in corneal thinning and bulging causes a highly irregular

astigmatism. Once the use of glasses is not effective, correction is achieved through the use of rigid contact lenses.

- **C3R*** (Corneal Collagen Crosslinking with Riboflavin) – This is a non-invasive treatment to increase the strength of the cornea in order to prevent progression of the condition.
- **Intracorneal rings*** - When there is intolerance to contact lenses and when the condition continues to progress, intracorneal rings may be inserted in order to reinforce the cornea and reshape the surface of the eye.
- **Corneal transplant*** - in the advanced stages, either a partial thickness graft (Deep Anterior Lamellar Keratoplasty or DALK) or a full-thickness graft (Penetrating Keratoplasty or PK) may be necessary.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Corneo-Plastic Unit (eye clinic)

Tel: 01342 414470 / Fax: 01342 414106

8.30am to 4.30pm

For enquiries out of hours, weekends and bank holidays, please contact Ross Tilley Ward. Tel: 01342 414466 / 4451

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