

Ophthalmology Department

Keratoconus Monitoring Clinic

The purpose of this leaflet is for patient information:

To explain Keratoconus

To outline the review process after you have been diagnosed with Keratoconus

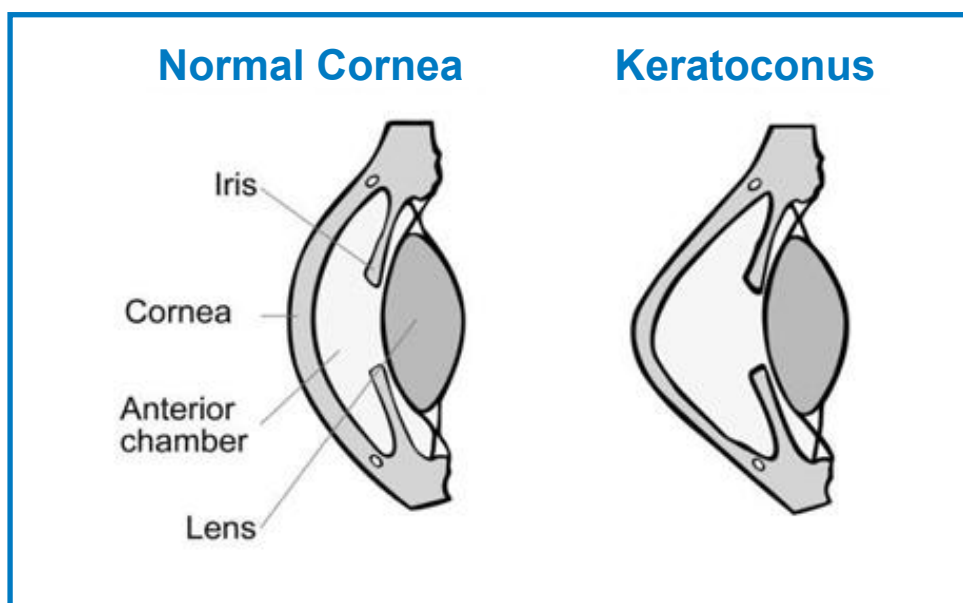
Keratoconus

The cornea is the clear window of the eye and is usually a round, fairly spherical shape.

In Keratoconus the cornea becomes thinner and bulges outwards in a cone shape.

It is a progressive condition and can get worse over time.

The speed of change and severity varies between affected people and individual's eyes.



How is vision affected by Keratoconus?

Keratoconus can cause the vision to become blurred because the front of the eye is no longer completely round and smooth.

This affects the focus of your eye, causing increase short sightedness (Myopia) and Astigmatism.

In advanced stages of keratoconus, scarring may develop which causes further blurring.

In a small number of patients Hydrops may develop, this occurs as a sudden painless loss of vision due to fluid entering a very thin cornea. This will normally settle with time.

What causes Keratoconus ?

The cause is not known exactly. It may be partly genetic and can run in families.

People with asthma and eczema are also more prone to developing it. And there appears to be a link between keratoconus and people who rub their eyes frequently.

Keratoconus is most often diagnosed in young people in their teens or early twenties. It is more common in non-Caucasians and affects approximately 1 in 450 people (depending on ethnicity).

How is Keratoconus diagnosed by the Ophthalmologist ?

The eye specialist will examine the cornea with a slit-lamp microscope. Scans of the cornea (Topography) will be taken to measure the corneal shape and thickness.

This is painless.

Is there treatment for Keratoconus?

There is no cure for Keratoconus, but there are treatments to reduce the risk of progression.

In the early stages glasses will be adequate for patients to see well.

For some patients contact lenses may be necessary for better vision.

The contact lenses are usually hard gas permeable, but sometimes soft lenses are adequate and some need lenses made specifically for keratoconus.

In very advanced cases even contact lenses may not provide adequate vision and a corneal transplant (graft) may be necessary.
Most patients with keratoconus will not need a corneal transplant.
Monitoring of keratoconus at regular intervals from the point of diagnosis is vital to check for progression.

Corneal Collagen Cross-linking (CXL)

CXL is a well-established treatment which can potentially stop keratoconus from progressing.
It involves Ultraviolet light and vitamin B2 drops to stiffen and strengthen the cornea.
It is over 90% effective with a single procedure.
However, it is only suitable for some people with progressive keratoconus.
As with all operations there are risks, hence although CXL is safe, there is a small risk of worse vision afterwards.
Here at CHFT , we refer our patients to Leeds for treatment if CXL is required.
Please see our separate CXL leaflet

What we do not do in this clinic

The clinic is only to monitor keratoconus.
It is important to stress that no extended eye examination will be performed and we will not be checking other eye problems.

Further advice:

Please avoid all eye rubbing to help reduce risk of keratoconus progression.
You can use appropriate preservative free artificial tears regularly and when needed to improve comfort of your eye.
Anti-histamine eye drops can also be very helpful to reduce itchy eyes due to hay fever or allergies
We recommend continued regular eye tests at your optician

Acknowledgements : Keratoconus Group Leaflet
see <http://www.keratoconus-group.org.uk>

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Eye clinic 01484 3505085

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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