

WHAT IS ASTIGMATISM?

Astigmatism is an imperfection in the curvature of the cornea or lens of the eye. Normally, the cornea and lens are smooth surfaces which allow light to refract properly on the back of the retina. However, in astigmatism, light does not refract correctly, leading to refractive error.

An irregularly shaped cornea is known as corneal astigmatism, and an irregularly shaped lens is known as lenticular astigmatism. In both cases, vision will appear blurred or distorted.

Many people are born with some degree of astigmatism. Adults with a higher degree of astigmatism will notice the distortion in vision; however, children born with astigmatism may not notice any condition and are unlikely to complain about blurred or distorted vision. This is why it is important to have routine eye exams so problems such as astigmatism can be detected.

It is unknown why some people have different curvatures in their cornea or lens, but it is possible that this is an inheritable condition. Other causes of astigmatism can be eye disease, eye injury or surgery.

ASTIGMATISM SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of astigmatism include blurred or distorted vision, eyestrain, headaches, eye discomfort. Having these symptoms, however, does not mean that you have astigmatism. Follow-up care with your Ophthalmologist is recommended if you are experiencing such symptoms.

TREATMENT PLAN

Mild astigmatism can be treated with glasses or contact lenses. Surgery is also an option for correcting astigmatism, including LASIK.