

## Keratoconus



### What is Keratoconus?

Keratoconus is a progressive, genetic disease that results in a distorted cornea. In early keratoconus, patients may be able to wear glasses or soft contact lenses. In moderate to advanced disease, these patients need to wear contacts in order to see clearly –this is also the definition of a Medically Necessary contact lens. Some keratoconus patients end up with scarring in their corneas and require a corneal transplant. However, not all patients require this.

### Does keratoconus run in the family?

It can run in the family, and that is one of the reasons we recommend that all of our patients have their eyes checked yearly at their comprehensive eye and vision exam.

### If I have keratoconus, can I still have LASIK?

Keratoconic eyes can be made far worse if a laser is used to thin the cornea. Often times, LASIK surgeons will avoid surgery on patients that have even a family history of keratoconus in order to avoid post-surgical complications.

### Does keratoconus just keep getting worse, or does it level out?

It is an unpredictable disease and its presentation varies from patient to patient.

## I have keratoconus but I can't wear hard lenses. Do you have soft lenses for keratoconus?

There are soft contact lenses that can correct corneas with keratoconus as well as scleral lenses that offer great comfort and vision without the traditional irritation felt when wearing a hard lens. SynergEyes is a unique "hybrid" contact lens that is comprised of a soft lens surrounding a hard center. Your first step should be to schedule an exam with us to discuss with your doctor which type of lens is best for you and your needs. It is important to consider that no single lens works for all keratoconus patients.

## Do medical/vision plans help cover the costs of contact lens fittings and contact lenses?

These lenses are generally more expensive than standard soft or hard contact lenses because of the time needed to fit and order them. Most vision plans cover only a flat amount for standard soft / hard lenses, but may include a plan for Medically Necessary lenses. These plans will often cover the entire amount of the fit, and lenses, for a single co-pay. These plans offer "true insurance" for the patients that need these lenses the most. Our fitting costs and lens prices are quite fair and are well worth the life-changing experiences these lenses offer. Care Credit, or a custom payment plan directly through us, are both great options to help patients that are unable to front the money to get in these designs.

## How often do I need to change out my hard contact lenses?

All hard contacts that we fit are designed to be changed each year. Eyes, as well as vision, change over time, and it is important that we see you yearly in order to optimize the fit of your lenses and keep your vision at its full potential.

## Do patients with keratoconus need glasses?

A good pair of back-up glasses is always recommended for contact lens wearers.

## What do lenses for keratoconus cost?

There are a wide variety of lenses that can manage keratoconus. They vary in price and you should talk with your eye doctor about the different ways to correct your vision.

## Are hard lenses uncomfortable?

When fit properly, hard lenses are easy to wear and care for.

If you have keratoconus and have questions about how best to manage your condition, please schedule a time to speak with Dr. Brian Abert, O.D., FAAO, or Dr. Jami Swenson, O.D. to learn about how to get you seeing your best. Call our office at **(303) 450-2020**

