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Keratoconus

Keratoconus is a progressive thinning of the cornea that, if not treated appropriately, will result in considerable vision loss from the irregular corneal shape this condition may cause. Perforation of the cornea and scarring may occur. Spectacle lenses can only improve vision marginally and do not afford any therapeutic effect. In other words, the keratoconus will continue to progress.

The most universally recognized and accepted treatment modality for keratoconus is the prescription of rigid, gas-permeable contact lenses. In the foreseeable future soft contact lenses will be available for treating keratoconus by using wavefront technology to correct higher-order aberrations.

Rigid contact lenses tend to reshape the keratoconus to a more reasonable or normal shape, thus enabling the patient to achieve normal or near normal vision. Because the cornea is soft tissue, this effect is only achieved while wearing the contact lenses, which is why the lenses should be worn as prescribed.

Keratoconus represents one of the most difficult contact lens fitting challenges. It requires a great deal of patience and perseverance for both patient and doctor. Continued monitoring on a regular basis is essential because keratoconus requires a lifetime of support and care. It should not be taken lightly. You should be seen at least every 6 months to make changes when necessary to ensure the maintenance of corneal health. Properly fitted contact lenses tend to reduce the progression of the cone and afford a greater degree of comfort.

The majority of keratoconus patients can maintain their contact lens-corrected vision throughout life with acceptable levels of comfort.

The only other alternative is corneal transplantation, which, for obvious reasons, is reserved as a treatment of last resort.

