



Ophthalmology • Refractive Surgery
Laser, Cataract & Implant Surgery

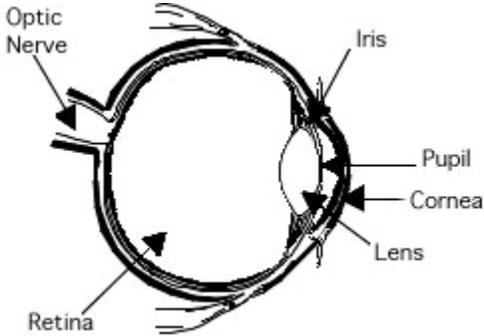
Corneal Abrasion

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What is the cornea?



The cornea is the eye's outermost layer. It is the clear, dome-shaped surface that covers the front of the eye and helps focus light onto the retina.

The fact that the cornea is the first layer of the eye makes it the most likely to become injured as a result of foreign objects entering the eye. Injuries to the cornea are most likely to occur as a result of work-related accidents, such as wood and metal shavings flying into the eyes, or even lawn debris while cutting your grass.

It is also common as a result of sports injuries (often a finger in the eye), or from flying glass that occurs during a car accident. Regardless of how it happens, an injured cornea can be painful and detrimental to your vision

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How does the cornea respond to injury?

The cornea copes very well with minor injuries or abrasions. If the highly sensitive cornea is scratched, healthy cells slide over quickly and patch the injury before infection occurs and vision is affected.

However, if the scratch penetrates the cornea more deeply, the healing process will take longer and, at times, will result in greater pain, blurred vision, tearing, redness, and extreme sensitivity to light. These symptoms require professional treatment.

After a thorough ophthalmic exam, your doctor will probably prescribe an antibiotic to fight infection, steroid drops to relieve swelling and redness, and may even give you a patch to wear over your eye to reduce strain and light sensitivity

Deeper scratches can also cause corneal scarring, resulting in a haze on the cornea that can greatly impair vision. In this case, corneal surgery or even a corneal transplant may be needed.

Tips

Prevention is key. Always wear protective goggles in any situation where flying debris can end up in your eye. You should be particularly sensitive to protection if you have already experienced a corneal abrasion.