Astigmatism

Astigmatism (uh-STIG-muh-tiz-um) is a common, mild and generally easily treatable imperfection in the curvature of your eye. The condition can cause blurred vision. Astigmatism is a refractive error, meaning it is not an eye health problem; it simply is a problem with how the eye focuses light. Light fails to come to a single focus on the retina to produce clear vision. Instead, multiple focus points occur, either in front of or behind the retina (or both). The specific cause of astigmatism is unknown. It can be hereditary and is usually present from birth. It can change as a child grows and may decrease or worsen over time.

Symptoms:

Astigmatism makes it difficult to see fine details, either close up or from a distance.

Testing and Treatment:

Astigmatism can be corrected with glasses, contact lenses, or surgery.

A comprehensive optometric examination will include testing for astigmatism. Depending on the amount present, your optometrist can provide eyeglasses or contact lenses that correct the astigmatism by altering the way light enters your eyes.

Another option for treating astigmatism uses a corneal modification procedure called orthokeratology (ortho-k). It is a painless, non-invasive procedure that involves wearing a series of specially designed rigid contact lenses to gradually reshape the curvature of the cornea.

Laser surgery is also a possible treatment option for some types of astigmatism. It changes the shape of the cornea by removing a small amount of eye tissue. This is done using a highly focused laser beam on the surface of the eye.

References:

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