Astigmatism Conditions and Its treatment

Astigmatism

The ABCs of Astigmatism
The blurry stop sign illustrates a very common vision problem. Many people have some degree of astigmatism. In fact, it is rare to find a perfectly formed eye. Astigmatism appears to run in families and is often present from birth. If you have astigmatism, chances are good your children will have it also. It may worsen slowly over time but may remain fairly stable throughout life. Astigmatism often occurs with other vision conditions such as nearsightedness (myopia) and farsightedness (hyperopia.)

What is Astigmatism?
Astigmatism is a refractive error of the eye in which images focused on the retina are distorted or "blurred", often leading to headaches.

Astigmatism can be caused by the lens of the eye but it is most often described as resulting from an irregular curvature of the cornea of the eye. The cornea is the clear covering over the lens and the iris. It helps to transmit light through the eye and provides a large portion of the eye's light focusing power.

Areas of Body Directly Affected:
Eyes

Symptoms:
Headache / Blurred vision.

How Is Astigmatism Treated?
Almost all degrees of astigmatism can be corrected with properly prescribed eyeglasses or contact lenses. For a person with only a slight degree of astigmatism, corrective lenses may not be needed at all, as long as other conditions such as nearsightedness or farsightedness are not present. If the astigmatism is moderate to high, however, corrective lenses are probably needed.

- **Corrective lenses (eyeglasses or contact lenses).** For astigmatism, special contact lenses called toric lenses are prescribed. Toric lenses have greater light bending power in one direction than the other. After performing various tests, your eye doctor will determine the ideal prescription for your astigmatism.
- **Refractive surgery.** Another method for correcting astigmatism is by changing the shape of the cornea through refractive or laser eye surgery. While there is more than one type of refractive surgery, specific treatments are recommended on an individual basis.

Refractive surgeries require healthy eyes that are free from retinal problems, corneal scars, and any eye disease. As technology progresses, it is becoming more and more important that you explore all options and possibilities before deciding which refractive surgery and treatment is right for you.