



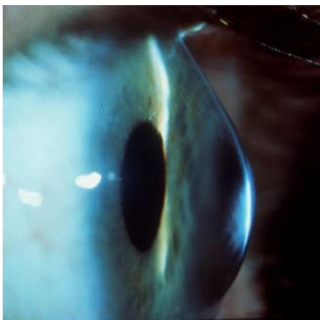
Having a corneal transplant for keratoconus



What is in this guide



This document is an Easy Read about having a corneal transplant for **keratoconus**.



Keratoconus is an eye problem.

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Some words are written in bold.
We explain what those words mean.



You can ask a friend, family member or support person to help you read this.

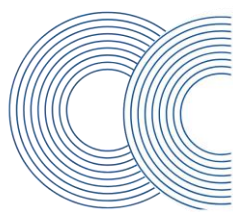
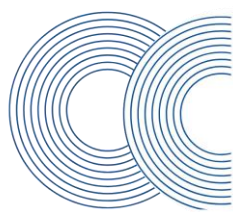
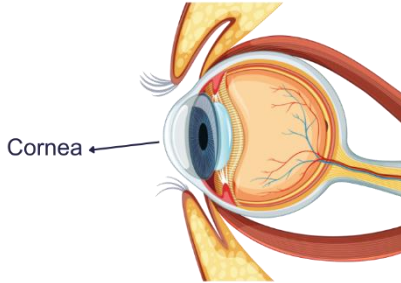


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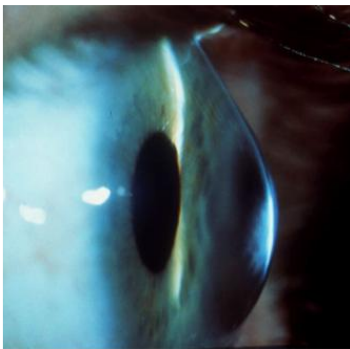
What is keratoconus?



One part of your eye is called the **cornea**.

The cornea is the clear front part of the eye.

It helps you to focus light when you see.

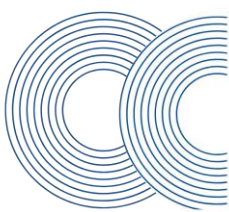


Keratoconus is an eye problem.

It is when the cornea gets thin and then sticks out like a cone.



The cone shape makes it hard for the eye to see clearly.





It might be uncomfortable to see in bright light.



Keratoconus usually affects both eyes.

It might affect 1 eye more than the other eye.



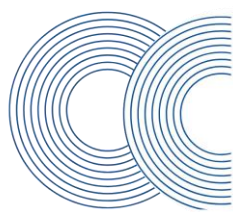
Sometimes the cornea sticks out too much and makes it hard to wear glasses or contact lenses.



If you have trouble seeing, it is important to see an **ophthalmologist**.

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who treats eye problems.

They can help find out if you have keratoconus.





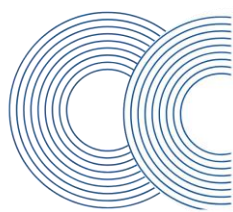
If you have keratoconus the ophthalmologist will help with your **treatment**.

Treatment is medical help to make your condition better.

The treatment will depend on how serious the keratoconus is.



In less serious cases of keratoconus, keratoconus can be managed with glasses and contact lenses.



What is a corneal transplant?



If you have keratoconus, you might need a **corneal transplant**.

A corneal transplant is an eye operation to get a new cornea.

A corneal transplant is also known as a corneal graft.

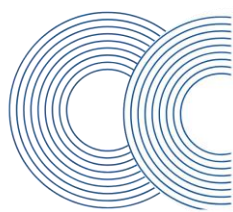


It is a safe and successful type of operation.

The doctor will decide if they think you need a corneal transplant.



In a corneal transplant the doctor will remove your damaged cornea.



They put in a new cornea from a **donor**.



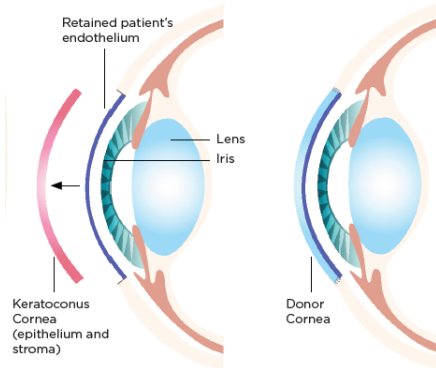
A donor is someone who has passed away and **who** gives away their body part to help a living person.

There are 2 types of corneal transplant for keratoconus.

They are:

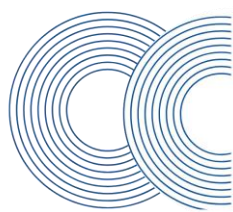
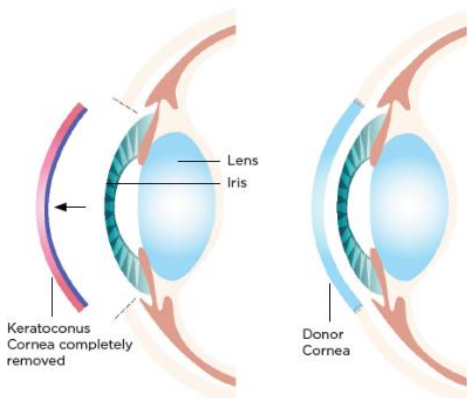
1. Deep Anterior Lamellar Keratoplasty (DALK).

Some of the cornea is removed and replaced with a donor cornea in this type of transplant.



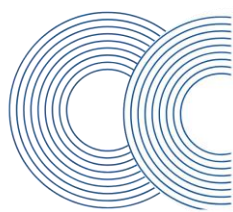
2. Full thickness Penetrating Keratoplasty (PK).

All the layers of the cornea are replaced with a similar sized donor cornea in this type of transplant.





The ophthalmologist will do an assessment to see which type of transplant is best suited for you.



When a corneal transplant is successful



A corneal transplant for keratoconus is successful when:

- The cornea is clear.
- Has a good shape.
- There is no pain.

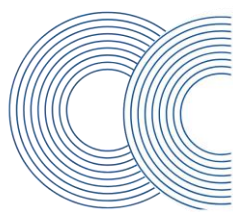
If these things change, it might mean that the transplant is not working anymore.



The doctor might decide that you need another transplant.



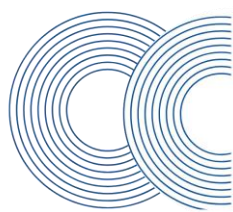
Getting better vision after a corneal transplant can take time.



It might take a few months to over a year to recover.



Some people who have a transplant might still need glasses or contact lenses to see well enough to do things like drive a car.



How often are corneal transplants successful



The Australian Corneal Graft Registry collects information about corneal transplants.

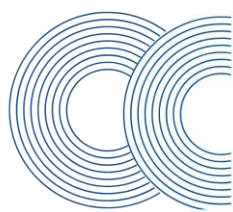
They are known as the ACGR for short.



The ACGR looks at information from past corneal transplant procedures.

This helps doctors do better work and find out what might go wrong in a corneal transplant.

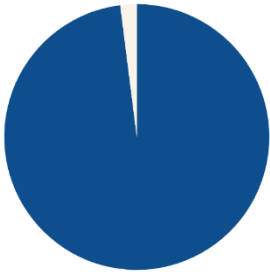
The ACGR has data on over 48,000 corneal transplants.



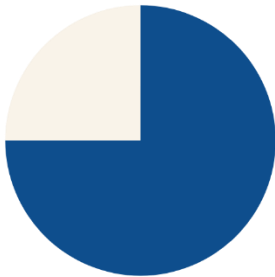


The ACGR has looked at how successful corneal transplants are.

They found that:



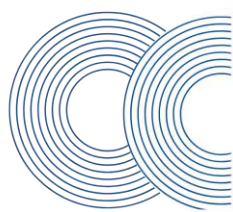
- Almost all of the corneal transplants for keratoconus survive for the first year (98%).



- 75 out of 100 people have a working graft 5 years after the corneal transplant.



- Most people still wear glasses or contact lenses after the transplant.



Recovering after your transplant



The time to recover after a corneal transplant is short.

After the transplant you will need another appointment with the ophthalmologist for a check-up.

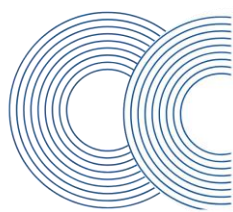
At the check-up appointment, the ophthalmologist will:



- Check how your eye is healing.



- Tell you of any medications you will need to take.





- Give you instructions about how to care for your eye.



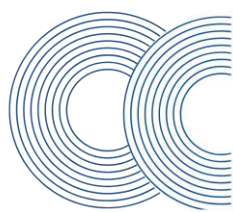
- Tell you of signs of **complications** to look out for.

Complications are any unexpected medical problems that could happen after the transplant.



Some patients might need an appointment at 12 months to remove some stitches and adjust the new cornea.

Most people who have had a corneal transplant will need a check-up appointment every year.

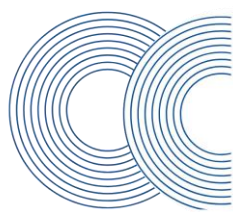




After your transplant you may need to take time off from:

- Work.
- Driving.
- Lifting heavy things.
- Doing certain exercises.

You will need to talk to the ophthalmologist about when you can return to doing those things.



Risks of corneal transplants



A corneal transplant is a safe operation.



But it does have some risks and **complications**.

Complications are any unexpected medical problems that could happen after the transplant.

Some complications that could happen are:

- ~~Rejection.~~

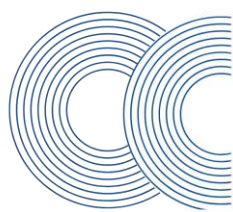
Please update to:
Graft rejection is when your immune system reacts to the donor cornea.

Please bold Graft Rejection

→ ~~Rejection is when your body reacts badly to the donor cornea.~~



- Eye infections.



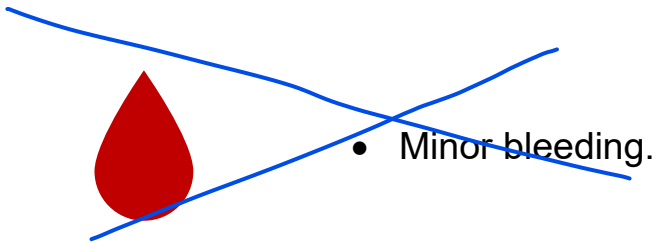


- **Glaucoma.**

Glaucoma is an eye problem with the liquid in your eye.

- Glaucoma is a problem with the pressure in your eye. Please bold Glaucoma

- Issues with your stitches.



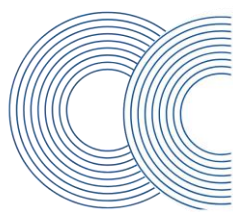
- Minor bleeding.



- **Cataracts.**

Bold cateracts

- Cataracts is an eye problem that happens when the lens of your eye becomes cloudy.



- Problems with your **retina**.

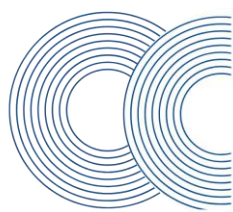
The retina is a part of your eye that senses light.



It is important to talk to your ophthalmologist about these risks.



It will help you to make decisions about having a corneal transplant.



Thank you to donors



Corneal transplants help people see better.



These transplants need **donors** to give their corneas.

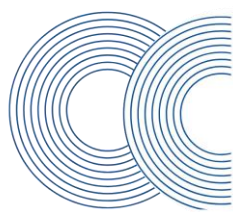
A donor is someone who has passed away and **who** gives away their body part to help a living person.



Donors are very important for this process.



People who get a transplant can write a thank you note.



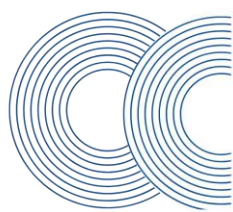


The note is sent to the donor's family.



If you want more information about organ donation, you can visit the Donate Life website:

donatelife.gov.au



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