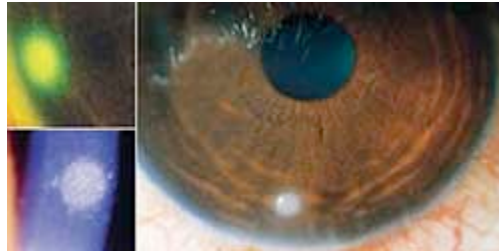


Keratitis (Corneal Ulcers)



Definition

Corneal ulcers (keratitis) occur after corneal trauma with a foreign body (including contact lenses), and with dry eyes or lid disease which allow bacteria or fungi to enter the cornea, causing a deep infection and inflammation. This condition may cause severe pain, reduce visual clarity, produce a corneal discharge, and perhaps erode the cornea. As a general rule, the deeper the corneal infection, the more severe the symptoms and complications. It should be noted that microbial infections such as keratitis, although relatively infrequent, are the most serious complication of contact lens wear.

Symptoms

- Pain
- Blurred vision
- Light sensitivity
- Discharge
- Redness

The symptoms described above may not necessarily mean that you have keratitis. However, if you experience one or more of these symptoms, contact your eye doctor for a complete exam.

Treatment

Minor corneal infections are commonly treated with anti-bacterial or anti-fungal eye drops. If the problem is more severe, a person may receive more intensive antibiotic treatment to eliminate the infection and may need to take steroid eye drops to reduce inflammation. With residual corneal scarring or thinning, corneal transplantation may be necessary to restore vision. Early treatment may help reduce the risk of complications. Frequent visits to an eye care professional may be necessary for several months to eliminate the problem.