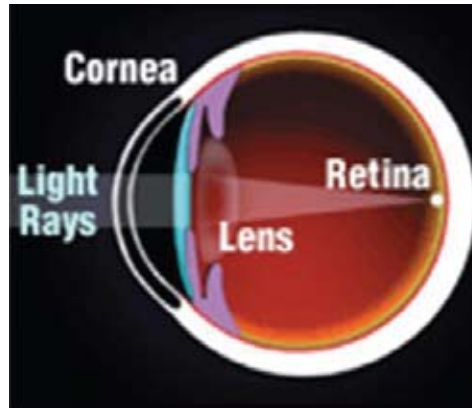
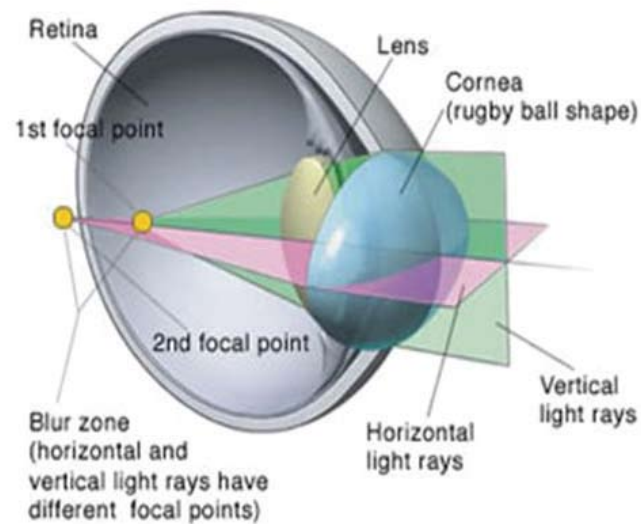


## Facts

- Astigmatism is a treatable eye condition that can cause blurred vision and headaches.
- It is a refractive condition in which the eye's optical system is incapable of forming a point image for a point object. (images are misconstrued)
- The refractive error of the astigmatic eye stems from a different degree of refraction in different meridians; for example, the image may be clearly focused on the retina in the horizontal plane, but not in the vertical plane, or not on the retina in either plane.
- It occurs when the front surface of the eye is uneven; an irregular shaped cornea or lens prevents light from focusing properly on the retina, the light sensitive surface at the back of the eye. As a result, vision becomes blurred at any distance.



## CROSS SECTION OF ASTIGMATIC EYE



## What is the treatment?

In most cases, astigmatism can be corrected by wearing properly fitted spectacles or contact lenses.

Milder astigmatism may not need treatment unless the person has a job that strains their eyes, for example, computer work.

In some cases, astigmatism can be corrected by an operation called refractive surgery, which reshapes the cornea.

## What are the symptoms?

*Severe astigmatism:*

- Vision blurred or distorted whether the person is reading close up or looking further into the distance.

*Mild astigmatism:*

- *Vision blurred at certain distances*
- *Tired or dry eyes*
- *Struggle to focus or read*
- *Headaches, especially when trying to focus.*

## How is it diagnosed?

Astigmatism should be diagnosed by a qualified Optometrist, Ophthalmic Surgeon or Eye Specialist.

A full optometric examination should be done to assess the degree and extent of the problem.

Small children, who may not be able to answer the optometrist's questions about what they can see, can be assessed using a test called retinoscopy that involves reflected light.