

Overview of Corneal Dystrophies

A corneal dystrophy is a condition in which one or more parts of the cornea lose their normal clarity due to a buildup of cloudy material. There are many dystrophies that affect all parts of the cornea. These diseases share many traits:

- They are usually inherited.
- They affect the both eyes equally.
- They are not caused by outside factors, such as injury or diet or other disease.
- Most progress gradually.
- Most usually begin in one of the five corneal layers and may later spread to nearby layers.
- Most do not affect other parts of the body,
- Most can occur in otherwise healthy people, male or female.

Corneal dystrophies affect vision in very different manners. Some cause severe visual impairment, while a few cause no vision problems and are discovered during a routine eye examination. Other dystrophies may cause repeated episodes of pain without leading to permanent loss of vision.

Some of the most common corneal dystrophies include Fuchs' dystrophy, keratoconus, lattice dystrophy, and map-dot-fingerprint dystrophy (also known as epithelial basement membrane dystrophy).