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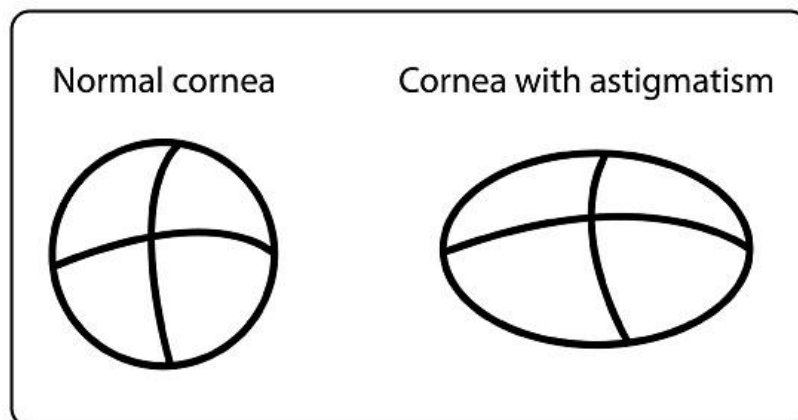
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ASTIGMATISM

This defect is when the light rays do not all come to a single focal point on the retina, instead some focus on the retina and some focus in front of or behind it. This is usually caused by a non-uniform curvature of the cornea. A typical symptom of astigmatism is if you are looking at a pattern of lines placed at various angles and the lines running in one direction appear sharp whilst those in other directions appear blurred. Astigmatism can usually be corrected by using a special spherical cylindrical lens; this is placed in the out-of-focus axis. Instead of the cornea having a symmetrically round shape (like a tennis ball), it is shaped more like a rugby ball, with one meridian being significantly more curved than the meridian perpendicular to it.

Astigmatism usually causes vision to be blurred or distorted to some degree at all distances. Symptoms of uncorrected astigmatism are eye strain and headaches, especially after reading or other prolonged visual tasks. Astigmatism is usually combined with Myopia or Hyperopia.



MYOPIA or NEARSHIGHTED

Myopia occurs when the eyeball is too long, relative to the focusing power of the cornea and lens of the eye. This causes light rays to focus at a point in front of the retina, rather than directly on its surface. If you're nearsighted, the first number ("sphere") on your eyeglasses prescription will be preceded by a minus sign (-). The higher the number, the more nearsighted you are. Correction of myopia can happen by wearing glasses/contacts made of concave lenses to help focus the image on the retina.

