

Superficial Keractomy

This material will help you understand your superficial keractomy procedure and what you can expect.

What is a superficial keractomy?

Superficial keractomy is a procedure in which the outermost layer of the cornea (the epithelium) is removed. The cornea is the clear window in the front of the eye. Scarring or damage to the surface of the cornea, which can cause pain and blurry vision, may require the removal of the cornea's surface layer.

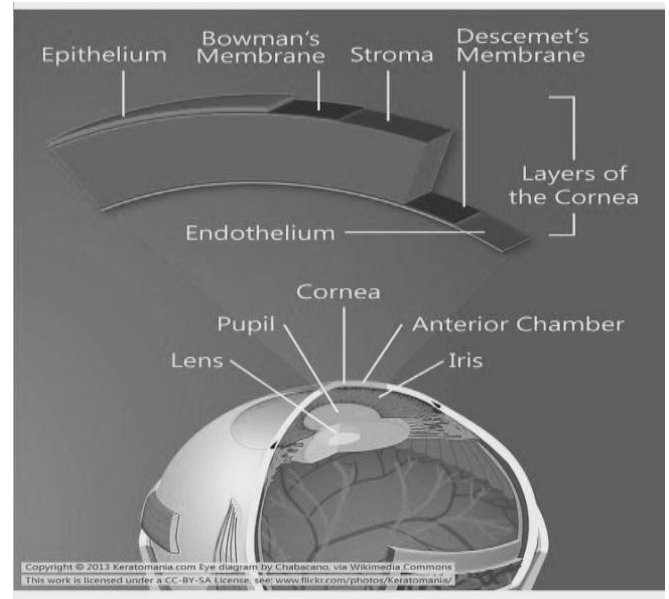


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Conditions that commonly cause scarring or damage to the cornea include: recurrent corneal erosions, band keratopathy, and Salzmann's nodular degeneration.

What do I need to know before my superficial keractomy?

There are no special preparations for this procedure. You should eat normally and take all your regular medicines before you come in for the procedure.

The procedure is performed on an outpatient basis in your doctor's office, so you will be able to go home the same day. Be sure to arrange for a responsible

adult to come with you, stay during procedure, and take you home. Your eyes will be blurry after, so you should not drive that day.

What can I expect during my superficial keractomy?

On the day of your procedure, you will come to the Kellogg Eye Center Cornea clinic. A technician will first take a few measurements of your eyes. Next s/he will instill eye drops to numb your eye and prepare you for the treatment.

Local anesthesia may also be used to further numb the eye.

After your eye is numb, your eye doctor will first scrape away the outer layer of the cornea. This will expose the underlying scar tissue or deposits. Your eye doctor will then use special tools to remove this tissue. The procedure is quick, usually only taking 10-15 minutes.

Once the scar tissue has been removed, your doctor will usually place a bandage contact lens on top of the eye. This will protect your healing eye and help to decrease discomfort.

What can I expect after my superficial keractomy?

Your vision may be cloudy or blurry after the procedure, but it should clear and return to normal in a few days to weeks. The treated eye is also usually red and swollen afterwards. Applying a cold compress to the eyelid may help relieve some of your discomfort. Your doctor may also prescribe an eye drop to further reduce redness and irritation. Eye drops should be applied to your eye regularly to help with healing. It typically takes 6-8 weeks for the eye to completely heal.

You will have a follow-up appointment with your eye doctor one week after the procedure.

Are there any complications related to this procedure?

As with most procedures, there is a chance of a complication. Your doctor will discuss many of these with you when s/he talks with you about consenting to surgery. You should call your eye doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms (or any others that worry you):

- Increased pain not helped by Tylenol® (Acetaminophen)
- Change in vision
- Any redness or swelling around the eye gets progressively worse

If you call the clinic after clinic hours, you will be told how to get in touch with the eye doctor on call. There is an eye doctor on call every day of the year.

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Author: Kathleen Koviak, MPH Candidate
Reviewers: Christopher Hood, MD and Gale Oren, MILS

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