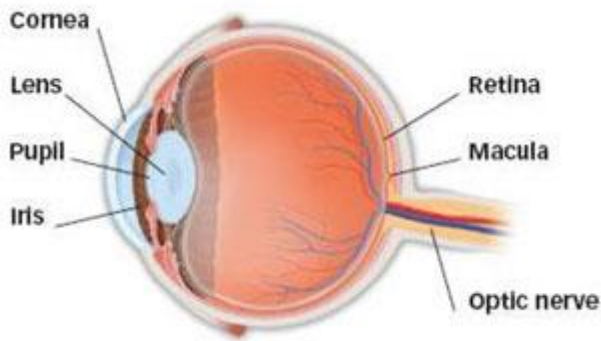


# What Is Bacterial Keratitis?

Bacterial keratitis is an infection of the cornea (the clear, round dome covering the eye's iris and pupil) that causes pain, reduced vision, light sensitivity and tearing or discharge from your eye. Resulting from infection from [contact lens](#) use or from [injury](#) to the eye, bacterial keratitis usually develops very quickly, and if left untreated, can cause blindness. The bacteria usually responsible for this type of keratitis infection are *Staphylococcus Aureus* and, for contact lens wearers, *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa*.

## Keratitis eye infection



Superficial keratitis involves the uppermost layers of the cornea. When this form of keratitis has healed, there is usually no scar on the cornea.

Deep keratitis affects deeper corneal layers. There can be a scar left after healing which may or may not affect your vision, depending on where the scar is located.

In addition to bacterial keratitis, there are a number of other types of keratitis eye infection, some of which include:

- Amoebic keratitis (usually affecting contact lens wearers, it is often caused by *Acanthamoeba*);
- Fungal keratitis (infection with fungi);
- [Viral keratitis](#) (caused by *herpes simplex* and *herpes zoster* viruses);
- Photokeratitis (due to intense ultraviolet radiation exposure, e.g. snow blindness or welder's arc eye).

## Bacterial Keratitis Symptoms

Symptoms of bacterial keratitis may include:

- Reduced vision;
- Pain in the eye (often sudden);
- Increased light sensitivity;
- Tearing;
- Excessive tearing or discharge from your eye.

If you experience any of these symptoms, especially if they come on suddenly, call your ophthalmologist right away. If not taken care of, a keratitis eye infection can lead to blindness. [Bacterial keratitis treatment](#) must be started right away to prevent vision loss.

# What Causes Bacterial Keratitis?

Bacterial keratitis can have various causes, including:

- Contact lens use, especially extended-wear lenses;
- Use of contaminated eye medicine or other solution applied to the eye;
- Use of topical steroids;
- Recent corneal disease;
- Reduced immunity due to diabetes, alcoholism or poor nutrition.

If you experience any [bacterial keratitis symptoms](#) such as pain, reduced vision, light sensitivity and tearing or discharge from your eye, see an ophthalmologist immediately. [Bacterial keratitis treatment](#) must be started right away to prevent possible blindness.

## Bacterial Keratitis Treatment

To accurately diagnose [bacterial keratitis eye infection](#), your Eye M.D. may gently scrape the eye to take a small sample of material and test it for infection. He or she will also discuss your [bacterial keratitis symptoms](#) with you. Your ophthalmologist will diagnose whether your keratitis is bacterial keratitis or [fungal keratitis](#).

Bacterial keratitis is usually treated with antibiotic drops and may require multiple return visits to your ophthalmologist. Drops are usually put in frequently. Treatment may also involve a topical steroid applied to the eye.

If you wear contact lenses, it is very important to safely handle, store and clean your lenses to reduce your risk of developing a keratitis infection. Learn how to [safely take care of your contact lenses](#).