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## **PTERYGIUM**

A pterygium is a fleshy white growth that appears on the surface of your cornea. They are quite common in patients that have grown up in warm weather climates and the ultraviolet radiation from the sun is the strongest factor in their growth. A pterygium can grow in size and with time can extend across your cornea to cover your pupil and decrease your vision.

The main symptoms from a pterygium are irritation and redness. The pterygium can cause the corneal surface to become irregular and this can reduce your vision. If it grows toward the pupil this will also distort the vision. Some patients, however, have no symptoms at all.

Other than wearing sunglasses and lubricating drops there are not many medical treatments for this. The definitive treatment is surgery to remove the growth. If you simply remove the pterygium it will almost always re-grow. To prevent this we use a specialized procedure where we take a piece of healthy tissue from the eye and move it to the area that the pterygium started. This helps to block the eye from re-growing a pterygium.

We treat many people with this condition and most will never require surgery. If you are experiencing irritation from a pterygium or just want to know if yours is growing we would be able to tell this from a surface examination of your cornea.