Corneal Dystrophy

Corneal dystrophy can be caused by accumulation of liquid or abnormal material such as cholesterol crystals in the retina. There are many types of corneal dystrophy, most of which are inherited, and over time patients experience corneal cloudiness and reduced vision. The eye contains five layers of tissue, and in corneal dystrophy, the disease will most often start at one layer and spread to surrounding layers over time. Corneal dystrophy can occur at almost any age, and affect both the right and the left eyes equally.

Forms of Corneal Dystrophy

A few of the disorders which fall under the classification of corneal dystrophy are the following:

- Fuchs' dystrophy
  - Among the more common corneal dystrophies, in Fuchs' the endothelial cells deteriorate. While the process is gradual, patients may experience pain and severe visual impairment.

- Macular corneal dystrophy
  - A very rare form of the disease which is autosomal recessive. The corneal cloudiness is over the entire retina, leaving no clear spaces. Typically the disease returns in about 10 years after corneal transplantation.

- Reis-Bucklers corneal dystrophy
  - One of the autosomal dominant forms of the disease, often times vision will be affected during early childhood. The peripheral cornea tends to be the only part not altered over time.

  http://dro.hs.columbia.edu/reisbucklers.htm

- Meesmann juvenile epithelial corneal dystrophy
  - Meesmann may develop in patients as young as one or two years of age. Cysts on the surface of the epithelial layer begin to burst causing patient to feel as though something is in their eye. Some patients may be treated by wearing soft contact lenses.

  http://dro.hs.columbia.edu/meesmann.htm

Detection of Corneal Dystrophy

In the early stages of corneal dystrophy, vision is not significantly affected, however over time, grayish white lines, circles, or clouding of the retina will occur. Regular eye exams can help to detect and track the disease.

Treatments for Corneal Dystrophy

In the early stages, eye drops or ointment can aid in the reduction of corneal edema. Surgical options are available in the form of corneal transplantation and offer excellent long term results.
Great Websites for support and or fellowship:

http://www.cornealdystrophyfoundation.org/
The Corneal Dystrophy Foundation

Fuchs’ Friends

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