



מרכז רפואי ע"ש ברוך פדה, פוריה
מסונף לפקולטה לרפואה של אוניברסיטת בר אילן בגליל
The BARUCH PADEH Medical Center, Poriya
Affiliated to The Faculty of Medicine in Galilee - Bar Ilan University



Organization Accredited
by Joint Commission International

Ophthalmology Unit

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ניתוח השתלת קרנית

Corneal transplant surgery

The cornea is a transparent tissue located at the front part of the eye, in front of the pupil, iris (the colored part) and the anterior chamber of the eye. The cornea plays a very important role in concentrating the light rays at the retina. There are cases in which the cornea is damaged and undergoes scarring and distortion processes which necessitate a corneal transplant.

What is a corneal transplantation?

Corneal transplantation is a surgical procedure in which the damaged cornea is replaced by a new cornea that is obtained from donors. It is possible to perform a full-thickness corneal transplantation which replaces the entire cornea, or a lamellar transplantation which replaces only the damaged layer, while the healthy layer remains.

Corneal transplantation is the treatment in cases of vision deteriorating for which there is no other treatment option.

A surgical solution and a cornea replacement by transplant surgery is applied, when there is no other way to cope with disease that cause destruction of the cornea,

In which conditions is corneal transplant surgery done?

There are numerous different reasons for cornea transplantation but common to all of them is an irreversible damage to the cornea.

Transplant is done in cases of burns, scars after trauma and after various infections, mainly by herpes. In addition, there are ongoing situations that destroy the cornea such as hereditary diseases or keratoconus - a disease that causes distortion of the cornea.

Without referring to specific disease, it is understandable that the corneal transplant has several goals:

- Improving the vision- replacement of a cloudy cornea improves vision and turns it more clear. As mentioned previously, if the cornea is cloudy or scarred, the light rays fail to fully reach the retina and vision will be impaired.
- Cosmetic amendment – in very rare cases, people with scarred cornea sometimes seek to improve the cosmetic appearance of their eye, and in such a case, are even willing to undergo corneal transplant.



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The surgery process

Corneal transplantation is the transplantation surgery that got the best success rate, and in Israel 900-1000 such surgeries are performed yearly.

Rejection of the transplant here is less common, mainly because there are no blood vessels in the cornea.

However, after the surgery anti-rejection drugs are required as they assist to increase the success rate to about 85%. Transplant surgery is performed under complete or partial anesthesia.

During the surgery, the damaged cornea is removed and replaced by the donated cornea by fine stitches. During the post-surgical months the stitches are removed gradually and eventually a continuous cornea is obtained.

Corneal donation

The cornea is considered a very "popular" organ in terms of transplant surgery, and that is due to it being relatively easy to work with. Corneal transplant does not require complicated matching of blood type or other genetic profiles, because, as stated, it does not contain blood vessels. This is an excellent news for those who are waiting for a transplant, as here in contrast to the other organs transplant, finding a suitable cornea for transplantation is easier and less specific.

In addition, a cornea can be kept refrigerated for about a week. That allows of course a better preparation for surgery to the candidate and the staff. This time interval is of course a significant advantage versus other organs for which the transplantation must be performed within a few hours.

The Department staff wishes you a successful surgery!