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#### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

# Endogenous retinoic acid signaling is required for maintenance and regeneration of cornea

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#### **Highlights**

- Retinoic acid (RA) synthesis by ALDH1A enzymes is essential for corneal maintenance.
- Aldh1a genetic loss-of-function in adult eye results in corneal thinning.
- RA treatment of *Aldh1a*-deficient mice rescues the corneal thinning phenotype.
- RA deficiency reduces cell proliferation & increases apoptosis in corneal epithelium.

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