The AOA’s CLCS Newsletter, June 2013

Afflictions of multifocal contact lenses
Andrew D. Pucker, O.D.

Think back to when you first started fitting soft multifocal contact lenses (MFCLs). Were you excited, nervous, hesitant, confused, or all of the above? If you answered some of the latter options, it is with good reason because even though the contact lens market has offered us many quality options, the deck is still stacked against us when it comes to fitting this modality. MFCLs still have numerous limitations, which may make it feel near impossible to fit some patients with them.

The following is a list of soft MFCL drawbacks:

- MFCLs induce glare and halos not experienced with most other types of refractive correction.¹
- MFCL wearers are less satisfied with their night vision compared to wearers of other types of refractive correction.¹
- MFCL wearers hit more road hazards, take longer to recognize road signs, and drive slower than drivers who wear other types of refractive correction.¹,²
- MFCL wearers make more errors with near visual tasks compared to subjects who wear other forms of presbyopic correction.³
- Ocular spherical aberrations increase in MFCLs with increasing add power.⁴
- MFCL performance typically deteriorates between fitting and follow-up, which commonly leads to unhappy returning patients.⁵
- MFCLs can cause slight visual field depressions when analyzed with an automated visual field.⁶
- MFCLs commonly compromise visual quality at distance to improve near vision.⁷
- MFCL use results in decreased contrast sensitivity compared to other forms of presbyopic correction.³
- There are few soft MFCL options for presbyopic patients with astigmatism.

With these limitations in mind, we need to actively manage our patients’ expectations and educate them on how to overcome the disadvantages of MFCLs because MFCLs are still often the best choice for our patients’ needs. Therefore, I encourage you to take the good with the bad and to continue fitting this challenging and rewarding product.

References:
Dr. Pucker received his Doctor of Optometry and Master of Science degrees from The Ohio State University, and he is currently a clinical instructor and pursuing a PhD in Vision Science at The Ohio State University. Dr. Pucker's research interests include the tear film, ocular inflammation, and contact lenses.

Please close this browser window to return to the CLCS Newsletter