



Soft contact lenses prescribed by licensed Eye Care Professionals are worn safely and comfortably by millions of people worldwide, and have a long history of providing wearers with a safe and effective form of vision correction. While contact lenses provide many vision benefits, they are not risk-free. Your Eye Care Professional can help you better understand how to get the full benefits of your contact lenses and reduce your chances of developing problems.

A contact lens is a medical device that requires a prescription



A contact lens is a medical device and can be worn to correct vision, as well as for cosmetic or therapeutic reasons. In the United States, all contact lenses, even purely cosmetic ones, require a prescription. They must be properly fitted and prescribed by an Eye Care Professional.

An eye examination is needed to determine an individual's suitability for contact lenses. This typically includes a refraction to determine the proper power of the lens and an assessment of the health of the eye.

Prescriptions for contact lenses and glasses may be similar, but are not interchangeable.

Contact lens prescriptions generally expire on a yearly basis, unless otherwise determined by your eye doctor. Seeing your eye doctor regularly for a comprehensive eye exam will not only assess your vision and need for updated prescriptions, but it may also help identify and lead to a diagnosis of other health concerns such as hypertension and diabetes.

Ask where you can get any patient information provided by the manufacturer of your lenses and lens care products, or go to the manufacturer's website to find. Also, contact your Eye Care Professional with questions about proper lens use and for any other eye health concerns.



Choosing the Right Contact Lens for You

Today, there are many contact lens choices available to correct vision conditions such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia.

Among the more popular options:

• Daily Disposable Contact Lenses

The healthiest way to use contact lenses is to wear for one day then remove and throw away prior to sleeping. Convenient, because there is no need to clean or store the lenses.

• Frequent Replacement

Most commonly prescribed to be disposed of on a regular recommended schedule. These lenses are taken out every night, properly cleaned and stored for re-use as directed by your eye care provider.

• Lenses for Overnight Use

While some lenses are approved for continuous overnight use, sleeping in lenses does increase the risk of suffering eye infections. It is also important to note that not all patients can achieve the maximum wear time.

It is recommended that the contact lens wearer first be evaluated without sleeping in them. If successful, then a gradual introduction of extended wear can be followed as determined by the prescribing Eye Care Professional. Once removed, it is recommended that the lens be discarded. The Eye Care Professional should examine the patient during the early stages of overnight use.

It is important to understand that the risk of an infected lesion on the cornea (ulcerative keratitis), extreme pain and permanent vision loss is greater for those who sleep in contact lenses, than for those who do not wear them overnight.

More frequent or additional follow-up visits may be recommended for patients who wear contact lenses overnight.

Developed in consultation with the



Special thanks to the American Optometric Association (AOA) Contact Lens and Cornea Section. For more information about eye health and vision care, contact an Eye Care Professional or visit www.AOA.org.



DO's and DON'Ts for Handling and Wearing Your Contact Lenses

When handling your contact lenses:

DO wash and rinse your hands thoroughly with a mild soap, rinse completely, and dry with a lint-free towel before handling your lenses. Avoid soaps containing cold cream, lotion, or oily cosmetics and hand sanitizers before handling your lenses.

DO inspect your lens before putting it in your eye. Examine it to be sure that it is moist, clean, clear and free of any nicks or tears.

DO NOT touch the lens with your fingernails and never use tweezers or other tools to remove lenses from the lens container unless specifically indicated for that use.

DO NOT use a lens if it is damaged or if the sterile blister package it comes in is opened or damaged.

When wearing your contact lenses:

DO remove your lenses immediately if you experience eye discomfort, excessive tearing, vision changes, and redness of the eye or other problems and promptly contact your Eye Care Professional.

DO NOT wear your lenses beyond the prescribed wear schedule, as serious complications may occur, including loss of vision.

DO NOT expose contact lenses to any water. Exposing contact lenses to water may increase the risk of severe eye infection that could lead to vision loss or blindness.

DO NOT wear someone else's contact lenses.



Contact Lens Solutions and Lens Cases

To reduce the risk of contact lens-related infection, here are some steps you should follow:

- » Always use fresh lens care products and lenses before the expiration dates. Never re-use old solution. Contact lens solution must be changed according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- » Never use saline solution and rewetting drops to disinfect lenses. Neither solution is an effective or approved disinfectant.
- » Use only solutions recommended by your Eye Care Professional and always follow the directions in the package inserts. Do not transfer contact lens solution from its original container to anything other than storage cases.

- » Never re-use solution
- » Do not use saliva or anything other than the recommended solutions for lubricating or wetting lenses. Do not put your lenses in your mouth.
- » Bacteria can grow in contact lens cases, so it is important to properly use, clean and replace your case once a month.
- » After removing your lenses from the contact lens storage case, empty it of all solution, and clean the case by rubbing and rinsing with solution recommended by your eye care provider. When finished, wipe the case with a clean, lint-free tissue to remove any excess solution and allow the lens case to air dry with both the case and cap(s) face down.
- » Seek immediate professional care if your eyes become red, irritated or if vision changes.