

Optometry Department

Information Leaflet for Soft Contact Lens Wearers

You have been prescribed a soft contact lens to wear in your eye. This leaflet will explain how to care for your new contact lens.

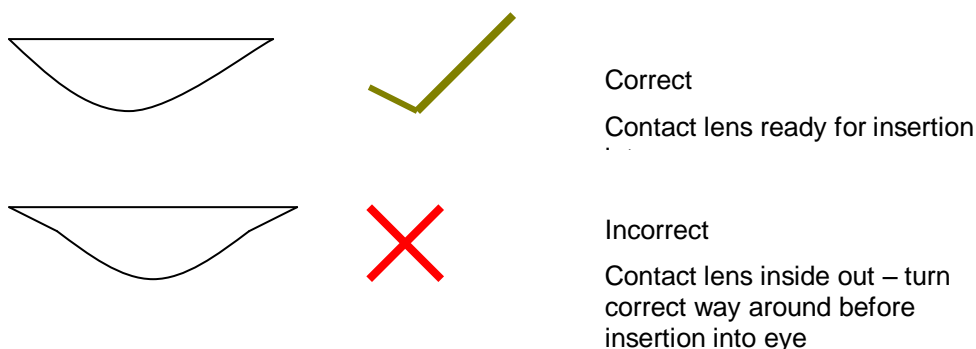
- Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly before inserting or removing your lenses
- Take care not to catch the lens or your eye with your fingernails – keep your fingernails short and clean
- Work over a clean, flat surface.
- Use contact lens solution to rinse your lenses and cases – do NOT rinse them with tap water as this can cause eye infections
- Do not swim, bathe or shower in your contact lenses because tap water can cause serious eye infections
- To minimise the possibility of mixing your lenses up, it is a good idea to get into the habit of always inserting and removing the same lens first.

Lens Insertion

1. Remove the lens from the storage case and ensure it is not damaged, particularly checking the edges for any splitting.
2. The lenses should be rinsed with the multipurpose solution prior to inserting them into your eyes
3. Ensure the lens is not inside out. When it is the correct way round, the lens is shaped like a cup. If it is inside out, it is shaped like a saucer with the edges facing out.



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4. Place the contact lens onto the tip of your index finger of your dominant hand
5. Pull the lower lid down with the middle finger of the same hand
6. Draw the upper eyelid up with the fingers of the other hand
7. While firmly holding the eyelids at the base of the eyelashes, gently place the lens on the eye
8. Try to keep both eyes open when inserting your lenses and try not to blink
9. When the lens is on your eye, close your eyes slowly and blink several times

Lens Removal

After you remove the contact lens from your eye, it must be cleaned before it is put in the storage case to remove the microbes and deposits that have built up on the lens during the day.

- When removing your lenses you should follow the same routine each time to prevent mixing up your lenses
- Keep your chin down and look upwards
- Pull your lower lid down gently with your middle finger. Slide your contact lens down onto the white of your eye with the index finger of the same hand
- To remove the lens, keep the index finger on the lens and gently pinch the front surface with your thumb and index finger (never with your nails).

We may advise you to use a different method to insert and remove your lenses – if so, please follow the instructions from the clinic.

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Lens Cleaning

Always use the care system recommended to you in the clinic.

1. Place the lens into the palm of your hand and put two or three drops of the multipurpose solution (usually Quattro or Optifree) onto the lens
2. Rub the lens gently but firmly with the little finger of your other hand for approximately thirty seconds.
3. After rubbing the lens, it is essential to rinse it with the multipurpose solution to remove the loosened debris.
4. Fill the storage case with fresh solution. Place the lens into the correct side of the storage case. This soaking solution **MUST** be changed on a daily basis.
5. Leave your contact lenses to soak overnight in the closed case or for a minimum of six hours.

Contact Lens Case Hygiene

Discard the solution from your case, rinse the case with the multipurpose solution and leave the case to air dry.

- Eye infections can occur because of poor lens case cleaning. The contact lens case should be scrubbed with a dedicated toothbrush on a weekly basis with multipurpose solution and then left to air dry. Do **NOT** use soap in case it is not fully rinsed away.
- The contact lens case should be replaced with a new one at least every three months.

Contact Lens Problems

Occasionally you may experience mild discomfort or redness with your lenses. If discomfort is caused by a dirty, dusty or damaged lens, or by the contact lens being inside out, symptoms will usually improve when the lens is removed. More serious problems- such as corneal infection are unusual but can cause irritation, pain, redness, tearing or discharge. The eyes may also be sensitive to light and vision may be blurred. In almost all cases of infection, symptoms are not relieved by removing the contact lens.

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What are the chances of getting an infection?

Fortunately sight-threatening contact lens-related corneal infections are rare, affecting about 4 in 10,000 contact lens wearers per year. This increases to 24 in 10,000 contact lens wearers if lenses are worn during sleep, therefore you must avoid sleeping in your soft contact lens.

If you suspect you have an eye infection or other problem that needs medical attention, do not delay in seeking medical advice.

Dos and Don'ts of contact lens wear

1. Never sleep in your contact lenses
2. Never wear a split or torn lens as it may damage your eye – always inspect the lens before insertion
3. Never swim, bathe or swim in contact lenses because the water can contain microorganisms which may cause serious sight threatening infections.
4. Never clean or wet your contact lenses with saliva, tap water, household detergents, chemicals or cleaning fluids
5. Take care when applying any form of make-up, hairspray or perfume not to get them on the contact lenses. Best practice is to put hairspray on before you insert contact lenses and put make-up on once the contact lenses have been inserted.
6. Always clean you contact lenses as instructed. Most contact lens complications result from poor compliance.
7. Never re-use or top-up contact lens solutions in the case. Check expiry dates on bottles and how long you can safely keep the solution once the bottle has been opened.
8. If you wear your contact lenses infrequently, change the solution in the case at least once a week.
9. If you have a cold/flu, do not wear contact lenses due to risk of infection.

Aftercare Checks

After you have been fitted with contact lenses, a series of aftercare appointments are necessary for as long as you continue to wear lenses. These will check that the contact lenses are fitting on your eyes correctly. The timing of these checks will vary to suit individual needs, but will

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decrease in frequency up to 12 months between visits. We are happy to see you at more regular intervals, especially if you have any problems or queries, so please call the clinic for advice/an appointment.

For all aftercare visits, you should come wearing your contact lenses (preferably for at least 3 hours that day) and bring your contact lens case and any spectacles with you.

We are responsible for the fitting of the contact lenses, but we are NOT responsible for the detection of other eye diseases (for example glaucoma) which aren't related to contact lens wear. For this reason, it is important that you still attend your local optometrist for regular eye examinations (at least every 2 years).

Contact Details

- If you have any queries about the care of your contact lenses please contact the Contact Lens Clinic on **02476 96516 (Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm)**
- In an **emergency**, contact Eye Casualty on 02476 964800 (Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5pm) or your local A&E department.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this Information in another language or format please contact 02476 96 6516 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

Document History

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