

Optometry Department

Instruction Leaflet for Parents Looking after Contact Lenses

Your child has been prescribed contact lenses. The lenses must be inserted and removed from the eye on a regular basis. Contact lenses must be thoroughly cleaned, correctly stored and handled carefully. Your child should be seen on a regular basis for contact lens check-ups.

How long can my child keep the contact lenses in for?

Lenses should be kept in the eye during waking hours and removed during sleep. There is a greater risk of getting an eye infection if the lenses are kept in for consecutive days without removing them for cleaning and to give the eyes a rest. This is why you will be encouraged as soon as possible to remove the lenses every night. Your optometrist will discuss this with you.

If at any time the eye looks red, watery, half closed, light sensitive, or just 'not right', please remove the lens immediately and seek advice.

There may be a danger of loss of sight if the lens is left in.



Patient Information

Please read ALL of the instructions carefully.

- Always wash your hands with soap and water, and dry your hands thoroughly with a lint-free cloth before inserting or removing your child's lenses.
- Take care not to catch the lens or your child's eye with your fingernails – keep your fingernails short and clean.
- Work over a clean, flat surface.
- Use saline solution to rinse the lenses and cases – do NOT rinse with tap water as this can cause serious eye infections.
- To minimise the possibility of mixing the lenses up, it is a good idea to get into the habit of always inserting and removing the same lens first, for example, right eye first and left eye second.
- If your child wears two lenses, make sure they wear both lenses at the same time. If for any reason one lens cannot be worn, they should NOT wear the other lens either as this risks the eye without the lens becoming a 'lazy' eye.
- Look out for signs of infection, such as red, sticky or watery eyes and contact the eye department immediately.
- Do not wear the contact lenses to swim, shower or bathe because serious eye infections can be caused when tap water touches the contact lens.
- Ensure you always have a spare lens/set of lenses. If you have to use a spare lens, telephone the department to order another.
- Contact us if you have any queries on 02476 966 516.

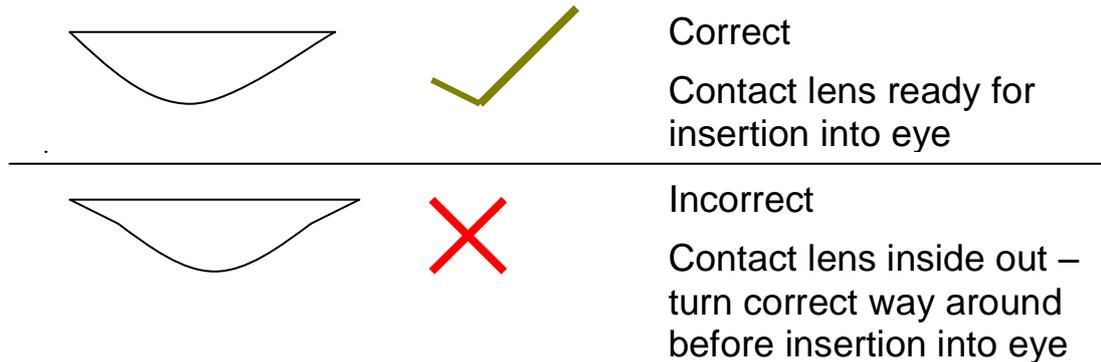
How do we insert the contact lens?

The instructions for inserting and removing the lenses sound very complicated, but when you are actually handling the lenses it is not so difficult. These instructions are simply to remind you what you were taught in the contact lens clinic. Almost all parents are scared of hurting their baby's/child's eyes at first, however skill and confidence soon improves. With time, you will become more confident.

The contact lenses are not painful but the child may cry in the same way as some infants cry when they are bathed.

Patient Information

1. Wash and dry your hands – avoid highly scented bar soaps – antibacterial liquid soap dispensers are generally best.
2. Ensure that your nails are short and smooth to minimise the risk of injury to the eye.
3. Remove the lens from its container and check it over for any nicks or tears around the edge.
4. Check the lens is the correct way around as shown in the clinic.



5. Hold the lens gently between your thumb and index finger ready to put into the eye. Using your other thumb pull up the top lid. It is important to place your thumb as close to the lashes as possible to maintain a firm grip when your child naturally tries to close their eyes. In order to do this you may need to put your thumb over the whole eyelid. Make sure the eyelid is dry, if necessary dry the eyelid or hold the lid through a clean tissue.
6. Place the edge of the lens under the top lid and then using your forefinger gently push the rest of the lens up under the lid until it sits on the eye.
7. Pull down the bottom lid and make sure the lens is in place.

The lens will move into the correct position in the eye unless it has folded - in which case it must be removed and replaced. A folded lens may be uncomfortable and the baby/child may try to rub it out. Only soft lenses can fold, but any lenses can slip underneath the top lid and disappear from view. The lens will not do any damage to the eye if it remains there for some time, even overnight if necessary. It cannot get lost behind the eye and will usually move back into place if left for any length of time.

Patient Information

What happens if I drop the contact lens?

If you drop the contact lens onto a clean surface rinse it with multipurpose cleaning solution before putting it into the child's eyes.

How do we remove the contact lenses?

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Place one thumb over the top of the lid and pull up the lid upwards towards the brow. Your thumb should cover the eyelashes. Try to make sure that the lid is pressed gently in towards the eye so that the lens cannot slip underneath the top lid.
3. Place the other thumb at the edge of the lower lid and pull it down again, making sure the lid is turned in towards the eye. You should not be able to see the inside of the eyelid.
4. Gently press on the edge of the lens that should now be visible and move thumbs together to scoop the lens out. You must put a little bit of pressure onto the eye (this does not hurt the child – try it on yourself) and the lens will pop out.

How do we clean the contact lenses?

Always use the care system recommended to you in the clinic

1. With washed and dried hands, place the lens in the palm your hand and put two or three drops of the multipurpose solution onto the lens.
2. Rub the lens gently but firmly with the little finger of your hand for approximately thirty seconds.
3. After rubbing the lens, it is essential to rinse it with the multipurpose solution in order 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

- Eye infections can occur due to poor lens case cleaning. The contact lens case should be scrubbed with a dedicated toothbrush on a weekly basis with saline or contact lens 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 every three months.

What are the risks of contact lens wear?

Everybody who wears contact lenses are at a higher risk of sight threatening eye infections compared to those who do not wear them. The risk is increased if the lenses remain in the eye during sleeping. Approximately, for every 10,000 people wearing contact lenses on a daily basis, 4 people will have serious eye infection within one year. If soft contact lenses are worn on an extended basis, i.e. during the night and day, the risk of serious eye infection increases to 25 people out of 10,000 within one year.

Serious eye infections are painful and may cause permanently reduced vision. Very rarely such infections can cause blindness and even the loss of an eye. It is important for parents' of children who wear contact lenses to be aware of the risks of contact lens wear.

Serious eye infections can still occur despite every effort to clean and care for contact lenses. If contact lenses are not cleaned and cared for properly the risk of infection is much higher.

Aftercare checks

Once you are happy with the technique of inserting and removing the lenses and are doing this on a daily basis, we will see your child at three-monthly intervals to check the lenses are fitting correctly and are the correct prescription for your child. We will also be checking the eyes are remaining healthy. However, the child will still have regular checks with the orthoptist and consultant clinic. To check the prescription of the contact lenses, we may need to put drops in your child's eyes to allow us to get an accurate result and this will be done annually.

Patient Information

We are happy to see your child at more regular intervals, especially if you have any problems or queries, so please call the clinic for advice or an appointment.

Contact Details

If you have any queries about the care of your contact lenses, please contact the contact lens clinic on 02476 96 6516 (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 us on 02476 966516 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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