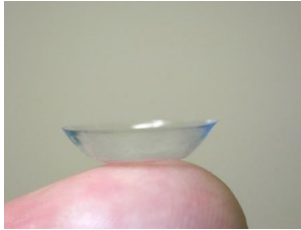


HANDLING YOUR SOFT CONTACT LENSES

Instructions



Starting Tips:

- Always wash and rinse your hands thoroughly before handling your lenses and dry your hands with a lint-free towel/tissue before touching your lenses. Clearer soaps are better since they contain less lanolin that can smear the contact lens surface. Avoid liquid soaps.
- Dry your hands with a lint-free cloth as trapped dust under the lens may cause irritation.
- All traces of soap, perfumes, hair sprays, creams and lotions should be removed from your hands and around the eyes.
- Keep your nails trimmed and clean – long fingernails can tear or split contact lenses.
- Avoid picking up lenses with your fingernails – they can only be held safely between the fingertips or with soft plastic tipped tweezers specially designed for contact lenses.
- Do not touch your lenses with sharp, pointed objects (fingernails, pens, etc).
- Make sure lenses do not get caught on the edge of storage cases. Tapping the lens case on the table before screwing the top on will help completely submerge the contact lenses in solution.
- Never allow lenses to dry out and never try to insert them when they are in a dehydrated state.
- Do not use the lens if the pack is open or damaged.
- Never use expired lenses or solutions.

Which Way Round:

If a lens is inserted inside out, it will feel uncomfortable and often give fluctuating vision.

1. **Profile Method:** Look at the edge profile of the lens



Incorrect-lens edges curve out **Correct-lens edges curve up**

2. **Engraving or identifying marks:** If there is an engraving to identify the correct orientation of your lenses, your practitioner will demonstrate it.
3. **Squeeze Test:** Gently squeeze the lens between thumb and forefinger. If the edges meet, the lens is the correct way.

Lens Insertion:

To avoid confusion, make it a habit of inserting the same lens first. Check the lens is clean and moist – if not, rinse with saline or multipurpose solution. Check the lens is not inside out.

Now:

- Balance the lens on the tip of your forefinger.
- Pull the lower lid down with the middle finger of the same hand.
- Hold the upper lid firmly from above with the middle finger of the other hand. Make sure the finger is placed just where the eyelid meets the eyelashes.
- The eye is now wide open and the cornea exposed.
- Place the lens directly on the eye. Move your eyes around to help centre the lens.
- Release the lower and then the upper lid. Look down and gently close the eyes. Rub the top lid lightly to rub out any trapped air bubbles.
- If the lens is not properly centred on the cornea, gently manipulate by using fingertips and eyelids.

Len Removal:

- Rewet the contact lenses with one drop of solution to help the lens slide off the eye, especially if they are a little dry.
- Place index finger on the lens.
- Look up.

- Slide lens to white part of the eye using index finger.
- Gently squeeze the lens between thumb and forefinger to remove the lens.

Discomfort:

- If the lens is not comfortable, place a finger on the lens, slide it on to the white of the eye towards your ear and remove it.
- If discomfort persists remove the lens, rinse in saline or multipurpose solution, check the lens is clean, undamaged, is not inside out, and re-insert.
- If the lens continues to be uncomfortable, remove it and do not attempt to wear it again until you have consulted your practitioner.

Important Things to Remember:

- Discontinue lens wear if you experience persistent discomfort, redness or blurred vision and consult your practitioner.
- Lenses may become contaminated if worn in swimming pools or saunas.
- Unless advised by your practitioner, lenses should not be worn while sleeping.
- Extended wear lenses for overnight wear require special instructions from your practitioner.
- Lenses must be stored wet. If they dry out, soak lenses in saline or soaking solution for one hour until they return to a soft state. Then clean and disinfect as normal before using again.
- It is not advisable to wear lenses during periods of illness such as colds, influenza etc.
- Always use fresh solution. Do not use expired solutions/re-wetting eye drops/tear lubricants.
- Discard the lenses as recommended by your practitioner.
- Remove lenses before using medicated eye drops, undergoing surgery or anaesthesia.
- While wearing lenses, do not use any eye drops other than those, which your practitioner may recommend. Consult your eye care practitioner if in doubt.

NB: Insert lenses before applying makeup. Avoid hairspray. Avoid liquid hand soaps and moisturiser before handling lenses.

Daily Wearing Timetable:

Build up your wearing time as specified below:

Day 1 hours Day 2 hours Day 3 hours Day 4 hours
Day 5 hours Day 6 hours Day 7 hours Day 8 hours

Normal Adaptation Symptoms You Could Expect:

While getting used to your lenses, it is not uncommon to notice:

- Increased glare sensitivity outdoors – this can be relieved with sunglasses, but if it is excessive, consult your practitioner.
- Some initial discomfort with prolonged close work.
- Some dryness in air conditioning and smoky environments.
- Slight awareness of the lens.

NB: Always talk to your practitioner about ANY symptoms you may experience.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:

Cleaning and disinfecting are two separate procedures, which must be followed one after the other once the lenses have been removed from your eyes.

Cleaning:

The importance of effective cleaning cannot be over-emphasized. Clean each lens immediately after taking it out of the eye as this removes the sticky tear film, which builds up on the lens during wear.

Method:

- Place the lens in the palm of the hand.
- Apply 1 or 2 drops of your specified cleaning solution on the lens.
- Rub gently with a circular motion for about 15 seconds on each side of the lens. Make sure both sides of the lens are cleaned.
- **Make sure fingernails are trimmed and avoid direct fingernail contact with the lens.**

- Rinse **thoroughly** with saline or multipurpose solution. You may need to rinse and rub with saline or multipurpose solution more than once to ensure the entire cleaner is removed. Insufficient rinsing will mean that the contact lens may sting on insertion the next time.
- Place lenses in container (contact lens case recommended) ready for disinfection.

NB:

- Always place lenses in correct baskets/case to avoid mixing up right and left lenses
- Do not use tap water on your lenses.

Disinfecting:

Lenses must be disinfected following cleaning. This prevents lens contamination and helps avoid eye infections.

There are several methods of disinfecting:

1) **Peroxide Systems.**

After cleaning, lenses are placed in a container with hydrogen peroxide solution. This **MUST BE NEUTRALIZED** over a specified period by using tablets, platinum discs or other solutions. Your practitioner will fully explain the method, which is recommended for you.

Never put un-neutralized peroxide in the eye!

2) **Soaking Solutions: “One step sterilization/disinfecting systems”**

These soaking solutions contain a weak disinfecting chemical. The lenses can be taken directly from this solution and inserted into the eye. If stinging occurs advise your practitioner.

After cleaning, place lenses in the container/case with the recommended solution and leave overnight.

Note: With either system, the solution should be replaced every day and the case should be cleaned thoroughly once a week and replaced frequently as recommended by your practitioner. Dirty cases can harbour bacteria and may inadequately neutralise the

peroxide resulting in stinging on insertion. As will residual cleaners that have not been properly rinsed off.

Additional Cleaning Procedures:

Protein Remover Tablets:

With regular wear and despite lens cleaning, protein and salts from the tears tend to adhere to the lens surface. Non-disposable lenses require regular use of enzyme tablets to remove deposits and may require stronger in-office cleaning. Your practitioner will advise you at your aftercare appointments.

Comfort Drops and Tear Lubricants:

These are available to help rewet lenses while they are being worn. They are applied directly to the eye while wearing lenses.

Important:

- Do NOT modify the recommended cleaning/disinfecting regimes without first consulting your practitioner.
- Short cuts may save money, but will result in ineffective cleaning and/or disinfection, which could lead to damage to the lenses or infection of the eyes.
- Carry a list of the recommended cleaning solutions. Accept no alternatives without first talking to your practitioner. Some solutions may not be compatible and may lead to allergic reactions or discomfort.
- To help avoid contamination, do not touch the tips or nozzles of solution bottles and replace caps promptly after use.
- Store solutions in cool places.
- Do not use hard or gas permeable hard lens solutions with soft lenses.
 - If you don't wear your lenses for more than one week, change the solution in the case for fresh solution.

Follow Up Appointments:

- Regular after care appointments must be maintained for the health of your eyes.

- Wear your lenses to your follow up appointments – having worn them for at least three hours prior to the appointment and bring spectacles with you.
- Most complications are avoidable and treatable provided **that** we see them in time.
- Your practitioner is trained to observe and detect signs of problems before you become aware of them. By the time you notice a problem it may be more advanced and more difficult to resolve.
- The importance of regular contact lens aftercare is the prevention of long-term problems.

IMPORTANT!

If your eyes are sore, red, or there is any discharge, remove your lenses and contact your eye care practitioner.

After-hours contact Hospital acute eye clinic, Accident & Emergency clinic, your Optometrist or your Ophthalmologist.