
Maximizing Contact Lens Safety: What Consumers Need to Know

William Ehlers, MD
University of Connecticut Health Center
Farmington, Connecticut

Representations

- American Academy of Ophthalmology
 - Contact Lens Association of Ophthalmologists
 - The Cornea Society
 - American Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgery
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Disclosures

- Nothing to disclose.



Proper Lens Care

Personal Hygiene

- Before handling contact lenses, wash your hands with soap and water, then rinse and dry them with a lint-free towel.



Proper Lens Care

Avoid Contact with Water

- Minimize contact with water
 - Remove lenses before swimming or using a hot tub.
 - Contact lenses should not be rinsed with or stored in water (tap or sterile water).
 - Lens cases should be rinsed with solution, not tap water
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Proper Lens Care

Appropriate Solutions

- Never put your lenses in your mouth to wet them. Saliva is not a sterile solution.
 - Do not use saline solution and rewetting drops to disinfect lenses. Neither is an effective or approved disinfectant.
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Proper Lens Care

Follow Schedule Prescribed by ECP

- Wear and replace contact lenses according to the schedule prescribed by your eye care professional (ECP).
 - Follow the specific contact lens cleaning and storage guidelines from your ECP and the solution manufacturer.
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Proper Lens Care

Rub Lenses to Enhance Cleaning

- When cleaning your lenses, rub them with your fingers, then rinse the lenses with solution before soaking them.
 - This “rub and rinse” method is considered by some experts to be a superior method of cleaning, even if the solution you are using is a “no-rub” variety.
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Proper Lens Care

Proper Case Care & Replacement

- Rinse the contact lens case with fresh solution — not water. Then leave the empty case open to air dry.
 - Keep the contact lens case clean and replace it regularly, at least every three months.
 - Lens cases can be a source of contamination and infection.
 - Do not use cracked or damaged lens cases.
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Proper Lens Care

Handle Solutions with Care

- Do not re-use old solution or “top off” the solution in your lens case.
 - Do not transfer contact lens solution into smaller travel-size containers.
 - Transferring solution causes contamination, which can lead to an eye infection.
 - Do not allow the tip of the solution bottle to come in contact with any surface, and keep the bottle tightly closed when not in use.
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Proper Lens Care

Extended Storage

- If you store your lenses in the case for an extended period of time, consult the instructions for your lenses or the contact lens solution to determine if re-disinfecting the lenses is appropriate before you wear them.
 - In no case should you wear your lenses after storage for 30 or more days without re-disinfecting.
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Maximizing Safety

Lens Selection

- Single-use daily disposable lenses are the safest type of soft contact lens, in terms of reducing the risk of infection.
 - Rigid gas permeable lenses are a safer alternative than any type of soft contact lens.
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Understand the Risks of Extended Wear

- EW lenses may be an appropriate choice for some consumers, but you should know that overnight lens wear increases the risk of infection.
 - You should only wear lenses overnight with the approval of your ECP, and use only lenses that are specifically approved for this use.
 - Lenses worn overnight for orthokeratology (reshaping of the cornea to improve refraction) also increase the risk of eye infections.
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See Your Ophthalmologist without Delay

- Eye infections can lead to serious vision loss in some cases. If you think you have an eye infection, see an ophthalmologist, who is medically and surgically trained to treat eye infections, injuries and diseases without delay.
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See Your Ophthalmologist

- Remove the contact lenses and consult an ophthalmologist immediately if you experience symptoms such as redness, pain, tearing, increased light sensitivity, blurry vision, discharge or swelling.
 - If you smoke, stop. Studies show that contact lens wearers who smoke have a higher rate of problems than nonsmokers.
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Regular Examinations

- Contact lenses wearers should be examined by their ECP at least annually, and more often as needed.



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Contact Lenses are Prescription Items

- Contact lens prescriptions do expire—typically within one year. You should see your ECP yearly to ensure that you have an accurate and appropriate prescription.
 - Regular exams are also important opportunities for reinforcing proper lens care.
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The Risk of Passive Verification

- Ophthalmologists remain concerned about “passive verification” of contact lens prescriptions.
 - Third-party sellers (such as online vendors) notify ECP of customer requests to purchase contact lenses
 - ECPs then have eight business hours to affirmatively verify the prescription is incorrect, expired or otherwise problematic.
 - If the ECP does not confirm, some sellers presume the prescription is correct & valid and complete the sale.
 - Passive verification can lead to the fulfillment of expired prescriptions, and may extend the period between eye exams, increasing the risk to ocular complications.
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Shared Goals & Responsibilities

- Maximizing safe contact lens wear requires close cooperation
 - Contact lens industry
 - Researchers
 - FDA
 - Eye Care Professionals
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Patient Education

- Eye Care Professionals must educate their patients regarding the best contact lens practices.



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Monitoring Compliance

- Knowing the risk factors is not enough.
 - Studies show up to 79% patients are non-compliant with lens care, wearing, or replacement schedules
 - The partnership of lens wearers and ECPs is vital in ensuring that guidelines are understood & followed on a continuing basis.
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Avoiding CL Complications

Summary



Avoiding CL Complications

Summary



Thank You.
