

Tips for Contact Lens Wearers

Contact lenses are the number one choice for many people with vision correction needs because they can be used to correct a variety of vision disorders. Care should be taken when wearing, cleaning and storing contact lenses to ensure healthy eyes.

Applying Lenses

- Always follow the recommended wearing schedule.
- Wash hands thoroughly before applying contact lenses; avoid washing with overly scented or oily soaps that might adhere to the lens surface.
- Some eye doctors suggest always applying the first contact lens in the same eye, to avoid mixing up lenses for the right eye and left eye.
- Loosen the contact lens in the case by shaking it lightly. If it is stuck, do not try pulling at the lens as it might cause damage. Instead, add a drop or two of contact lens solution until it moves freely.
- Slide the lens out of its case and into the palm of the hand.
- Rinse thoroughly with the appropriate contact lens solution.
- Place the contact lens on the tip of a dry index or middle finger.
- With the fingers and thumb of the other hand, simultaneously pull up the upper eyelid and down on the lower eyelid.
- Position the lens on the eye while looking upward or forward. Alternatively, apply the contact lens by placing it on the white of the eye closest to the ear.
- Roll eyes in a complete circle. This process helps the lens settle. Then blink to make sure the lens is positioned correctly.

Removing Lenses

- Always wash hands thoroughly before taking out contact lenses.
- For soft contact lenses, look upward or sideways while pulling down on the lower eyelid. With an index or middle finger, gently maneuver the lens onto the white of the eye. There, gently pinch the lens together with the index finger and thumb and lift it off the eye.
- Hard contact lenses can be removed by bending over and opening the eye wide over an open palm of the hand. With one finger, pull on the skin of the eye's outside corner out toward the ear. Upon blinking, the contact lens should pop into the open palm.

Cleaning Lenses

- Do not substitute sterile saline solutions for multi-purpose solutions.
- Never mix different cleaners or drops.
- Rub and rinse contact lenses as directed by an eye care professional.

- Do not “top-off” the solutions in the case. Always discard all of the leftover contact lens solution after each use.
- Never reuse any lens solution.
- Clean, rinse and air-dry the lens case each time lenses are removed.
- Do not expose contact lenses to any water: tap, bottled, distilled, lake or ocean water.
- Never spit on lenses to clean them.
- Never let lotions, creams or sprays touch the lenses.
- Contact an eye care professional if there are any symptoms of eye irritation or infection.

Resources

- American Academy of Ophthalmology: www.aao.org/eye-health
- National Eye Institute: www.nei.nih.gov
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration: www.fda.gov

Some content on this page was gathered from documents found on the website for the Food and Drug Administration, part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The website is located at www.fda.gov.

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