

# ***General Tips for Contact Lens Wearers***

Which way is the Right way? How can I tell if my contact lens is inside out?

Make sure it looks like half a ball, not a soup bowl with a rim. Some contact lenses also have a brand name marked, on the edge to help you. If you can read it properly, the lens is not inside out.

## **Proper Contact Lens Care**

- **Remove contact lenses before eye contact with water**
  - Contact lenses should remove prior to swimming, showering or bathing.
- **Wash hands before handling lenses**
  - Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap
  - Hands should be dried well before touching contact lenses.
- **Clean contact lenses**
  - Contact lenses should be properly cleaned according to the instructions.
- **Disinfect contact lenses**
  - Proper disinfectant should be used to disinfect lenses; plain saline or rewetting drops are not disinfectants because they don't kill bacteria.
- **Use fresh products**
  - Each time you place your lenses in the case, or rinse them with solution, use fresh cleaning or disinfecting products.
- **Discard used solution**
  - Throw out solution. Never reuse it or top it off with fresh solution.
- **Store contacts in lens cases**
  - Contact lenses should always be stored in a clean and disinfected case.
- **Keep lens cases clean and dry**
  - Storage cases should be irrigated with sterile contact lens solution (not tap water), and left open to dry after each use to reduce the risk of water-loving bacteria taking up residence. They should be replaced every three months, at least.
- **Replace contacts regularly**

- Contact lenses should be replaced when their scheduled wear time is up.
- **Have regular eye exams**
  - Regular eye examinations should be scheduled to check prescriptions and detect early signs of infection or disease.
- **Replace contact lens storage case regularly**
  - Contact lens cases can encourage bacteria growth if not cared for properly. Lens cases should be kept clean and replaced every 3 to 6 months. Inexpensive cases, or the ones included with contact lens care kits, are safe and sufficient..
- **Care of contact lens case**
  - After removing your contact lenses, empty the case and rinse with fresh contact lens solution (never tap water). Cases should be cleaned after each use. Always allow the lens case to air dry. If the contact lens case gets cracked or damaged, discard it and replace it with a new one.
- **Colored contact lenses tips**
  - Colored contact lenses are not cosmetics, but are medical devices that require as much responsibility as regular contact lenses. Be sure to follow your doctor's recommendations for care of your contact lenses. Also, never share contacts or makeup.
- **Problems of contact lens storage in plain water**
  - Contact lenses should never be stored in tap water, nor should they be rinsed with tap water. Tap water often contains microorganisms that can latch onto the lenses, encouraging eye infections. Studies have shown that an organism called acanthamoeba is sometimes found in tap water. Acanthamoeba has been known to cause a devastating eye infection that can destroy the cornea, and sometimes the entire eye. Always use a contact lens solution for storing your contacts.
- **Warning signals for contact lenses**
  - If you have any pain, burning, redness, tearing or sensitivity to light while wearing any type of contact lenses, see your eye care professional immediately.
- **Contact lens drops**
  - Contact lens eye drops lubricate your eye and hydrate the contact lens, making your eyes more comfortable while wearing your contact lenses. These eye drops are labeled "For use with soft contact lenses". Your doctor or optometrist usually encourage frequent use of re-wetting drops, as it improves comfort and helps clear out debris underneath your contact lenses.

## **Contact Lenses & Allergy**

Many contact lens wearers with allergies face discomfort during certain times of the year. This discomfort is due largely to allergens in the air that become adhered to contact lenses. The allergens cause miserable symptoms such as itchy, watery and swollen eyes. Here are five tips to help you through the periods of discomfort.

- **Wear eyeglasses when possible**
  - Allergens such as pollen and dust often adhere to the thin surfaces of contacts. Switching to glasses will help you avoid an allergy attack.
- **Clean contacts frequently**
  - Cleaning will keep your contacts free of allergens. Consider using a preservative-free solution, to help avoid possible allergic reactions. If you wear disposable lenses, consider replacing them more often.
- **Keep eyes moist**
  - Allergens tend to cause dry eyes. Keep irritated eyes moist with artificial tears. The artificial tears will also wash the irritants out of your eyes.
- **Use cool compresses**
  - When your eyes are red and swollen, resist the urge to rub them. Rubbing will make the inflammation worse by spreading around the allergens. A cool, damp compress will help relieve discomfort.
- **Consult eye specialist**
  - Your eye doctor will recommend medical products for your particular symptoms. Some products may even help prevent allergy attacks. You should also see your eye doctor to rule out possible problems that may not be allergy-related.

## **Decorative contact lenses tips**

- Have a detailed checkup by a eye care professional. An eye doctor will be able to perform a contact lens evaluation to make sure the lenses fit well and it is safe for you to wear them.
- Purchase special effect contact lenses from your local eye care professional. Optometrists & ophthalmologists are licensed to dispense contact lenses and obtain them from reliable, well-recognized sources.
- Do not purchase them at convenience stores or beauty supply stores.
- Do not swim or sleep in decorative contact lenses.
- Do not share or swap them with friends.
- Always clean and disinfect your lenses before and after you wear them

# ***Cosmetics & Eyes***

## **Makeup and Eye Contact Lenses**

- Put your contact lenses on before applying makeup.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your contacts, to avoid transference any oils, creams or lotions to the lenses.
- Use only non-allergenic makeup. Almay and Clinique are some brands which have eye-friendly products.
- Cream eye shadow is less likely to get in your eye than powder. But creams can irritate your eyes more if they do make it into your eyes. Choose water-based rather than oil-based creams. If you prefer powder, keep your eyes closed during application. Then, brush off any excess powder before opening your eye.
- Never apply eyeliner between your lashes and your eye. Apply eyeliner only on the portion of your lashes that is well away from your eye.
- To remove eye makeup, wash and dry your hands. Then remove your contacts, being careful not to bump them into any makeup. Finally, use your eye makeup remover.
- Replace your eye makeup frequently - at least every three months. Don't use old eye makeup, because over time bacteria will get into the product and then into your eyes, where it can cause an infection. One way to tell if your makeup is too old is if it smells funny. Also, don't share your eye makeup with others.
- Don't use waterproof mascara as it may permanently adhere to the lens. Also avoid mascara that contains volume building fibers
- Don't use hairspray or other aerosols if you have already put in your lenses. Allow all hairspray to settle before walking into a room that has just been sprayed. Many times hair products can irritate the eyes and they are more susceptible now to problems because you wear contacts.
- Keep all nail polish remover and perfumes away from your contacts
- Let's separate eyesight facts from fiction. Knowing how to take good care of your eyes is the first step to protecting your sight for a lifetime.