

**OPTOMETRISTS
CONTACT LENS PRACTITIONERS
BEHAVIOURAL OPTOMETRY
CHILDREN'S VISION**

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HINTS FOR NEW CONTACT LENS WEARERS

1. Always wash hands before handling contact lenses.
2. Never soak lenses in tap water or saline, always in the recommended disinfecting solution. Saline solutions should only be used for rinsing. **YOU MUST SOAK YOUR LENSES IN FRESH DISINFECTING SOLUTION AFTER EVERY WEAR** (unless of course they are daily disposable lenses, in which case they are just thrown away!).
3. Do not change solutions unless you have checked with your Optometrist first.
4. Always clean your contact lenses immediately after every wear (again, unless they are daily “one use only” disposable lenses) by giving them a “rub and rinse” with your multipurpose disinfecting solution. Deposits will be easier to remove if they have had less time to bind to the lens surface. A good shake of the storage case will also help.
5. With **conventional** lenses (as opposed to disposables) it is better to try to keep your lenses clean right from the start by using a separate cleaning solution (eg. Optifree surfactant cleaner) every day rather than allowing the lenses to become heavily coated with deposits that cannot then be easily removed. It is important to rinse the lenses well after using such a cleaner to avoid stinging when the lenses are inserted again next time.
You will see better and your lenses will be more comfortable and less easily contaminated if they are CLEAN, but please note that all contact lenses will accumulate surface deposits over time in spite of best cleaning practice. Thus conventional lenses will nearly always need to be replaced after 12 months of regular daily wear, and will often need to be replaced more frequently (*please ask us about quarterly replacement deals which offer great value*).
6. **ALWAYS FOLLOW THE RECOMMENDED REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE FOR YOUR PARTICULAR LENSES.** This is very important to maintain good vision and avoid eye infections - you will see better and your lenses will be more comfortable and less easily contaminated if they are CLEAN.
For **disposable** lens wearers we are happy to supply a “wearing record” tally sheet, and electronic cases are now available for added convenience.
For **conventional** lens wearers, a small supply of disposable contact lenses can be very handy to have at home as a “back up” in case of unexpected lens loss or damage.
7. Frequent regular replacement of your contact lenses storage case is also strongly advised to minimise risk of infection. Rinse the case and allow it to air dry after inserting your contact lenses each day.
8. Avoid rubbing your eyes whilst wearing contact lenses (especially whilst crying!!). However, if the contact lens dislodges from the cornea and "disappears" under the top eyelid, don't panic, it cannot "get lost behind the eye" and usually can be eased back by copious irrigation with saline or multipurpose solution and massaging with your finger under the bony upper orbit margin. If the lens remains out of sight and you are certain it is in your eye, come in and see your Optometrist.
9. Avoid showers, spas, saunas and swimming whilst wearing contact lenses because of increased risk of infection.
10. Do not sleep in your lenses unless they are the new silicone hydrogel contact lenses designed for this “**Extended Wear**” or “**Flexi Wear**” purpose. **Standard material** soft contact lenses do not allow enough oxygen to breathe through the lenses for them to be safely worn whilst asleep over night. However, if you do inadvertently sleep in such lenses, on awakening the lenses may have dried out and feel as if they are "stuck" to your eyes. Do not force the lenses out, but re-hydrate them by putting a few drops of saline (or disinfecting solution, or comfort drops) in each eye. When the lenses are moving freely again, remove them as usual and give your eyes at least a few hours rest before inserting your contact lenses again.

11. Avoid dry, dusty air-conditioned environments whilst wearing contact lenses. Close off the upper air vents in your car, and make sure to blink frequently, especially if working in front of a computer in an air-conditioned office for prolonged periods.

"Comfort drops" or tear supplements can be helpful if your eyes do become dry whilst wearing your contact lenses - it is best to use unit dose non-preserved drops if only using these products occasionally eg. unit dose *Refresh*, *Bion Tears*, but for frequent use it may be more economical to use a bottled product which has one of the new "gentle-to-the-eye" preservatives eg. *Refresh Contact Lenses*, *Genteal* (but note that multi-use bottled products will need to be discarded 4 weeks after opening).

12. Do not wear contact lenses whilst traveling on long journeys, especially in planes, as they will dry out and become uncomfortable very quickly.

13. If you lose your soft contact lens and it is not found until it is quite dry and hard, simply saturate the lens with fresh multipurpose solution before picking it up. When the lens is soft again, pick it up and clean and disinfect thoroughly before wearing again; if the lens irritates it should be discarded.

14. Give your eyes the opportunity to gently adapt to your new contact lenses, so gradually increase your wearing time during the first week from 4 to 6 hours on the first day, by 2 or 3 hours per day.

Even once you have adapted, **DO NOT OVERWEAR YOUR CONTACT LENSES**. This is particularly important with **standard material daily wear** contact lenses that are not suitable for sleeping. Always try to allow some waking time each day when you are not wearing your **standard material** contact lenses so that your corneas receive some "full" oxygen supply each day ie. either glasses or nothing for the first hour after awakening and preferably for the last few hours before bed. Try to have one day a week when you do not wear your **standard material** contact lenses.

With silicone hydrogel "**Extended Wear**" (or "**Flexi Wear**") contact lenses, we want to know that your eyes are tolerating the contact lenses well on a daily wear basis first. **DO NOT SLEEP IN YOUR LENSES UNTIL YOUR OPTOMETRIST HAS ADVISED YOU TO DO SO**. We will want to review you in-office before you sleep in the lenses, then early in the morning on the day after your first night of sleeping in the lenses, then after one week of extended wear and then after one month, and every 6 to 12 months thereafter.

15. Pay heed of symptoms and signs ie. if your eyes are trying to tell you that they are unhappy with your contact lenses: Every day look in the mirror and ask 3 simple questions: Do my eyes;

1. Feel good (no irritation or burning?)
2. Look good (no red or watery eyes?)
3. See well (check each eye individually for any blur)

Excessive glare sensitivity is another "warning sign" that should not be ignored.

Always remove the contact lenses if there is a problem; rinse and reinsert but if still a problem remove them and come and see your Optometrist. Our after hours emergency numbers are, Greg: 0409 789096 and Sue: 0418 507849

16. Always have an up to date pair of glasses and preferably wear them for some time each day (again, unless you are wearing the new silicone hydrogel contact lenses which are a lot more oxygen permeable than standard material contact lenses). At the very least, keep them on hand for occasions when you cannot wear your contact lenses (eg. lost or damaged contact lenses, eye infection, illness etc).

17. All contact lens wearers should have regular check ups with their Optometrist to ensure maintenance of eye health and good vision. Even if everything seems fine, an annual checkup is strongly advised for all regular contact lens wearers and is mandatory for supplying lenses to "Extended Wear" patients - we recommend that you present wearing your contact lenses one year and wearing your glasses (or no contact lenses) the following year.

Please note we have a **DISCOUNT SCHEME** for regular orders of disposable contact lens – we will be happy to supply every 6th regular order at **HALF PRICE!!**

Alternatively, we offer sizable discounts for bulk ordering of your disposable contact lenses – 10% if 4 boxes are ordered, 15% for 6, and 20% for 8 boxes.

And our **CONTACT LENS DISCOUNT CARD** entitles you to 15% DISCOUNT off all contact lens solutions and non-prescription sunglasses – you will now likely need a pair of these to wear over the top of your contact lenses!

Please, ALWAYS ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME FOR ORDERING REPLACEMENT LENSES (but we will nearly always have a suitable trial lens in stock which we will be happy to supply for those unexpected emergency situations!). Lenses can be ordered by phone, fax or email, and postage can be arranged.