

Optometry Department

Keeping Your Eyes Healthy with Contact Lens Wear

All contact lens wearers have a higher risk of eye problems (for example infection) than people who do not wear lenses. However, by following the advice below, you will keep the chances of any such problems to a minimum:

- Try to have an hour or two (of waking time) without contact lens wear each day
- Try to have a day off from contact wear each week
- Having a up-to-date pair of glasses allows you to take breaks from lens wear, and reduces the temptation to use your lenses on days when your eyes are red or uncomfortable
- Never swim with your contact lenses in as this increases the risk of infection*
- Never sleep wearing any type of contact lens as this dramatically increases the risk of infection*
- Always wash (and dry) your hands before handling your contact lenses
- Always clean and store your lenses using contact lens care products designed for the purpose** (these care products are often referred to as 'contact lens solutions')
- Do not reuse contact lens solutions**
- Consult your contact lens practitioner before changing contact lens solutions**
- Always 'rub and rinse' your contact lenses after use with your contact lens solution (even if the packaging says this is not necessary)**
- Replace your contact lens case at least every three months**
- Never let your contact lenses or case come into contact with tap water
- Use protein-removal tablets on non-disposable lenses at least once a month
- After inserting your lenses, wipe your case with a clean tissue & allow to air-dry upside down

* note: although your eye may recover fully from a mild infection (conjunctivitis), some more serious infections can effect vision permanently

** doesn't apply to daily disposable lenses

What to do if you experience soreness redness or blurring of vision with your lenses?

- If you experience any of these symptoms, remove your lenses immediately.
- If your lenses are daily disposable, throw them away. If they are reusable, clean and disinfect them thoroughly using your usual contact lens care products.
- If your symptoms persist after removing your lenses, consult your contact lens practitioner or GP as soon as possible
- If the problem resolves completely after lens removal, cautiously return to lens wear the following day (using a new pair of lenses if you use daily/monthly/fortnightly replacement lenses)
- If the problem returns, remove your lenses and consult your contact lens practitioner
- If your GP or contact lens practitioner feels that your eye problem is serious, they can call the eye clinic arrange a same-day or next day appointment (only your GP or contact lens practitioner can do this)
- Note: there is no 'walk-in' service at the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital Eye Clinic. Therefore DO NOT come to the eye clinic without consulting your GP or contact lens practitioner first