

# Instructions for Handling Soft Contact Lenses

## Summary

### Soft Lens Instructions

1. Wash Hands
2. Inspect Lens
3. Insert Lens
4. Wash Hands
5. Remove Lens
6. Clean Lens
7. Disinfect Lens

## Instructions for Handling Contact Lenses

Wash your hands before handling your lenses. Do not use any soap containing cream, lotion, oil, or perfume.

No	Yes
Softsoap	Neutrogena
Ivory Liquid	Ivory Bar
Caress	Opti-Soap
Dove	Clear dishwashing detergent (Joy)
Gentle Touch	Dial and Dial pump
Any deodorant soap	

Keeps nails short, filed and clean.

## Soft Contact Lens Instructions

*Never* let soft contact lenses become dry. *Never* soak them in tap or distilled water. If lenses dry out, they will become brittle. Should this occur, discard the lenses. If the lenses are uncomfortable after you insert them, remove them immediately and *call us*.

You will be given solutions and instructions to care for your lenses. Always clean the lenses first and then disinfect them. To clean, put a small amount of solution in the palm of the hand and rub the lenses to remove any loose debris on the surface. After rubbing the lenses, rinse thoroughly with saline and continue with the disinfecting segment of the care system. Store the lenses in the disinfecting solution until you are ready to reinsert them. Take them directly from the storage solution and insert them in the eyes. A lens should *never* be inserted that has not been disinfected by the system provided.

## Soft Contact Lens Schedule

Day	Wear Time (Hours)
1	4
2	6
3	8
4	10
5	12
6	12
7	12-14

(Maximum wearing time will be determined at your follow-up appointment.)

Remember to clean and disinfect your lenses if they are stored more than 48 hours. DO NOT RUSH YOUR WEARING TIME!

## Possible Contact Lens Complications

Wearing contact lenses is a reasonable method of attaining good vision as an alternative to glasses. However, wearing contact lenses is not without risk. The following conditions are possible complications of contact lenses. You must be aware of the potential hazards and accept these relative risks in addition to the benefits of contact lenses.

1. *Contact Lens Overwear.* This occurs when the contact is worn longer than the cornea can tolerate. Not enough oxygen gets to the cornea resulting in temporary discomfort and blurred vision. The treatment is to discontinue wearing the contact lenses for a few days.
2. *Corneal Abrasion.* This is a "scratch" on the surface of the cornea resulting from a poorly-fitting contact lens, foreign material under the contact lens or overwear. The treatments include antibiotics and possible patching of the eye. Infection may result from this condition.
3. *Allergic Reaction.* In this condition the eye becomes red and irritated in response to the cleaning and/or storage solutions. It is most often seen with soft contact lenses and is usually a reaction to the preservatives in these solutions. Treatment includes changing to different solutions and storage methods as directed by your practitioner.
4. *Tight Lens Condition.* This is most often seen with soft and extended wear contact lenses. The lens, which previously had fit well, "tightens up" and does not allow tears and oxygen to the cornea. This results in pain, redness, and swelling of the cornea and can lead to a corneal abrasion. The treatment is to refit the lens.
5. *Corneal Warpage.* This is most often seen with hard and gas permeable contact lenses. In this condition, the shape of the cornea becomes altered in response to the contact lenses. If severe warpage occurs, the lenses may no longer fit well and discomfort results. The treatment is to discontinue wearing the contact lenses until the warpage resolves, which may take weeks to months. During this healing time, the vision may fluctuate, requiring a change in the glasses prescription one or more times. Occasionally, the warpage may not resolve and the astigmatism created may persist.
6. *Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis (GPC).* In this condition, there is itching, lens intolerance, and redness while wearing the contact lenses. It is more often seen with soft lenses and is generally caused by a build-up of protein on the surface of the lens. Treatments include discontinuing lens wear for a period of time, switching lens types, and switching solutions.
7. *Corneal Ulcer.* This is the most severe complication of contact lenses and is more often seen with extended wear soft lenses. In this condition, trauma or contamination to the cornea from the contact lens results in an infection. This sometimes requires hospitalization for treatment

and can lead to extensive corneal scarring. Corneal transplant surgery may be required to regain good vision. Although very rare, it is possible that a patient could lose an eye from a severe corneal ulcer.

It is not possible to determine in advance whether you will become a successful contact lens wearer or not. Personal, physiological and environmental factors may require changes in the wearing schedule or termination of lens wear. Please keep your glasses prescription up-to-date in case you are unable to wear your lenses.

Adhering to the lens care system recommended is important. The risk of complications increases when you do not adhere to the lens care system prescribed for you. Switching or mixing products could cause irritation and/or permanently discolour your lenses.

A lens should be brought back to your practitioner for evaluation if:

1. It accumulates deposits, is no longer comfortable, or becomes discoloured and cannot be restored to its original condition using the methods in this pamphlet.
2. It becomes scratched, chipped, or cracked.

If you experience **redness, secretion, visual blurring, or pain (RSVP)**, **remove** your contact lenses **at once**. If the symptom subsides, the lenses can be cleaned and reinserted. If the lenses are removed and the symptom does not subside or reappears upon reinsertion, remove the lenses immediately and **call us!**

Contact lenses require proper care and handling. They must pass many rigid tests to insure proper power, shape, and durability. Contacts do not develop tears, nicks, or scratches by themselves. They are only caused through mishandling of the lenses by the patient. How well you care and handle them will determine how long they last. You must follow all instructions in caring for and handling your lenses. Failure to do so could damage your lenses. The average patient will replace at least one lens per year. Lost, damaged, or contaminated lenses *will not* be replaced free of charge.

Contact lens fitting requires a number of follow-up visits (two to three visits in the first three months). These visits are very important to ensure the proper fit of the lens and the health of the eye. Please keep all appointments made for you.

Contact lens appointments are recommended every six months and are mandatory yearly for prescription refill.

A contact lens prescription does not exist until the doctor deems your lens fit acceptable after several checks during follow-up care. After you have been released from initial follow-up care, you may request a copy of your contact lens prescription.

Your cooperation is vital to your success in wearing contact lenses.