



## Care of your soft contact lenses

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**Please read this leaflet carefully as it will instruct you on how best to take care of your soft contact lenses.**

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### How should I look after my contact lenses?

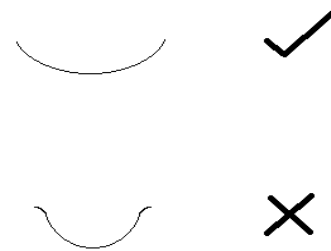
- Wash and dry your hands thoroughly before inserting or removing your lenses.
- Take care not to catch the lens or your eye with your fingernails – it is good practice to keep them short.
- Work over a clean, flat surface or put in the plug if doing it over a sink.

### Don'ts

- **Do not rinse your lenses and case with tap water** as this can increase the risk of eye infections – always use the recommended lens solution.
- Never shower or bath with your lenses in and make sure you don't get water in your eyes when washing your face.
- Do not sleep with your lenses in (unless you have been advised to by your contact lens practitioner).
- Don't swim with your contact lenses in. This is due to the risk of infection from the water. Prescription swimming goggles and other options may be available. We advise you discuss this with your contact lens practitioner.

### Inserting your contact lenses

1. Always insert the same lens first, to avoid confusion, so if you start with the right eye, always start with the right eye.
2. Your practitioner will show you any techniques to identify the correct lens for each eye.
3. Carefully remove the lens from its storage case or container.
4. Place the lens, cup side up, on the tip of your dry forefinger. To determine whether the lens is the right side out, look at the edges of the lens, it should appear almost straight up. If the lens is inside-out, the edges will flare out slightly (see diagram, right).



5. Look into a mirror and pull the lower lid down with the middle finger of the same hand.
6. Hold the upper lid firmly from above with the middle finger of the other hand to help prevent the blink reflex. Make sure your fingers are placed at the point where the eyelid meets the eyelashes.
7. Now look up to expose the white of your eye and gently place the lens onto this area.
8. Release the lower lid and then the upper lid and gently look downwards in order to place the lens onto your pupil. Finally, gently blink. Check the lens has centred correctly by checking your vision. Repeat for the other eye, if necessary.
9. Your vision may take a few minutes to stabilise following insertion of the lens. However, if poor vision persists, check that the lens isn't inside out or in the wrong eye.
10. If the lens becomes uncomfortable, it may be necessary to remove the lens for cleaning, rinsing and re-insertion. Should discomfort persist, remove the lens and do not wear it again until you have contacted your practitioner.

### **Removing your contact lenses**

Your practitioner will advise you how to best remove your lenses but a good method is outlined below:

- Pull down the lower eyelid and look upwards with your eyes.
- Whilst looking up, place the tip of your index finger on the lower edge of the lens and slide it down from the iris onto the lower white part of your eye.
- Still looking up, pinch the lens gently between your thumb and index finger and gently remove the lens from the eye.

### **Cleaning your contact lenses**

The importance of effective cleaning cannot be over-emphasised. Cleaning immediately after taking each lens out removes the sticky deposits that build up during wear. Use the recommended cleaning regime below; your practitioner will explain this to you.

- Place the lens on the palm of your hand turned upwards like a cup.
- Apply 1 or 2 drops of your specified cleaning solution on the lens.
- Rub gently with a circular motion for about 30 seconds. Make sure both sides of the lens are cleaned. Then rinse thoroughly.

Lenses must be stored in solution when not in use. After cleaning, place lenses in the storage case, cover well with fresh solution and leave for a minimum of 6 hours.

## Case hygiene

Not cleaning your contact lens case properly can result in eye infections – there is no point in putting a clean lens into a dirty case! Clean your case weekly with contact lens cleaner, rinse thoroughly with saline and leave to air dry. Replace your contact lens case with a new one every three months.

## Important things to remember

- Never use tap water on your lenses or case, as this can cause eye infections.
- Do not modify the recommended cleaning/disinfecting regimes without first consulting your practitioner.
- Always use fresh solutions and never use them after the expiry date. Change your solution after each wear. Change the solution if it has been longer than a week without wearing the lenses.
- Discontinue lens wear immediately if you experience persistent discomfort, redness, stickiness or blurred vision and consult your contact lens practitioner.
- Do not wear lenses while swimming.
- Do not wear lenses while sleeping, unless advised to by your practitioner.
- **If in doubt, take it out!**

## Daily wearing times

Build up your wearing time as specified below:

Day 1: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Day 4: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Day 2: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Day 5: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Day 3: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Day 6: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

Max wear time: \_\_\_\_\_ hours

## Follow up appointments

- It is vital that you attend regular aftercare visits to ensure that there are no complications, many of which are preventable and treatable provided they are seen in time. Many of these problems can be picked up by a health professional even though you may be symptom free. By the time you become aware of them, they may be advanced and more difficult to treat or resolve.
- Wear your lenses to your follow up appointments – having worn them for at least three hours prior to the appointment and please bring your spectacles with you.
- We will make sure you can insert and remove your lenses in clinic so you are confident to do it at home. Contact lenses will be dispensed for use at home. If needed, further handling sessions can be arranged with your local optician.

**Important contact details:**

Contact Lens Clinic (Orthoptics) PCEU, Windsor	0118 322 7169 (option 1 then option 2) Mon-Fri 8.30am-4.30pm
Contact Lens Clinic (Orthoptics) RBH, Reading	0118 322 7169 (option 1 then option 2) Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.00pm

Or email [rbb-tr.cat2@nhs.net](mailto:rbb-tr.cat2@nhs.net)

- Eye Casualty PCEU: Mon-Fri 8.30am-5pm. Sat 9am-12:30pm.
- Eye Casualty RBH: Mon-Fri 8.30am-5pm. Sat-Sun and Bank Holidays 9am-12.30pm.

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**I confirm that I have read and understood the information above.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please ask before your appointment if you need this information in another language or format.**

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