Patient information
Contact lens frequently asked questions
Contact lens service, clinic 4

Who is eligible for contact lenses at Moorfields Eye Hospital?
Contact lenses are provided at Moorfields only when there is a medical need. Usually, this is when vision cannot be improved with spectacles but can be improved with contact lenses. The contact lens clinical staff at Moorfields will assess eligibility. Examples of eligibility include some disorders of the cornea, high prescriptions (over +10.00DS/-12.00DS) and "bandage" lenses.

How do I get an initial appointment?
We must receive a referral letter, either from your GP, your optometrist, an ophthalmologist at Moorfields or another hospital.

How do I obtain a contact lens?
You will be assessed in the clinic to ensure that you are suitable and eligible for lenses. The lens type will be selected according to medical need. The lenses are often specially made, so you will usually require a separate appointment to have the lenses issued and to receive instruction on lens care.
How much do I have to pay for contact lenses?
Please contact the clinic for current prices. The charge is set by the NHS and is updated annually on 1 April.

- The payment is for one standard replacement contact lens (or where appropriate six months’ supply of daily or monthly disposable lenses)
- If lenses are to be posted, there is a small charge for all patients.

The same charges apply for replacement lenses or if a lens breaks outside the three-month manufacturers’ warranty period (this does not affect your statutory rights).

Please note that lenses will not be ordered until payment or proof of exemption has been seen.

Who is exempt from payment for contact lenses?

- Patients who have proof of qualifying benefit (our cashiers can advise)
- Patients requiring a lens as a "bandage" or "prosthesis"
- Children under 16, or 16 to 19 years and in full-time education
- Patients not in receipt of an eligible benefit can apply to the NHS Business Services Authority for a contribution to the cost of their lenses using an HC1 form, which can be obtained directly from the authority (0845 850 1166) or from Moorfields cashiers’ office on the ground floor at the City Road hospital
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- Patients who need their contact lens to be changed for clinical reasons within 12 months of payment

Someone who is exempt from standard charges, but repeatedly breaks or loses lenses will be charged for replacements (this does not affect your statutory rights).

To avoid the problems of contact lens loss, we advise that you keep a spare.

**How much do spare lenses cost?**
Costs can be obtained from the clinic and are reviewed annually. Please note that there is no exemption from payment for spares.

**How do I order replacement lenses?**
Please use one of the following methods to contact the contact lens orders department:
- E-mail to Contactlenses@moorfields.nhs.uk
- Telephone 020 7566 2479
- Write to us at contact lens orders, Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust, 162 City Road, London EC1V 2PD, UK
- Visit us at clinic 4, contact lens reception (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.45pm)
How long will it take to obtain replacement contact lenses?

- This depends on the complexity of the lens and the individual manufacturer, but typically:
  - Rigid gas permeable (corneal) lenses take two to six weeks
  - Scleral contact lenses take six to eight weeks
  - Cosmetic soft contact lenses take two to six weeks.

How do I insert, remove and care for my lenses?

Patients are taught how to handle and look after their contact lenses and detailed written instructions are provided. If you require further clarification, please contact contactlenses@moorfields.nhs.uk or phone contact lens orders on 020 7566 2479.

How can I obtain contact lens solutions?

- One month’s solutions can be supplied on prescription at each scheduled contact lens clinic appointment. The prescription is only valid at Moorfields' pharmacy. Each item incurs the standard NHS prescription charge.
- Patients are able to purchase additional supplies from Moorfields’ pharmacy.
- Unfortunately, solutions may not be prescribed outside appointments and will not be posted.

Can my GP prescribe solutions?

No, your GP can prescribe eye medication, but is prohibited from prescribing contact lens solutions.
Should I wear my contact lenses to the appointment?
Yes, if you can tolerate your lenses, we would like to assess the effect of the lenses on your eyes.

What happens if I do not keep my appointments?
Please advise our appointment clerks in advance if you know that you cannot keep an appointment so that an alternative date can be arranged (020 7566 2474 or 2711 or 2706).

Patients will be discharged if they fail to attend two consecutive contact lens clinic appointments or if they are not seen for over 15 months.

What happens if I am discharged?
- If you are not a current patient, you will not be able to obtain lenses or contact lens solutions from the hospital, nor can you be seen in the clinic unless you are re-referred by your doctor.
- If you are discharged from the hospital and continue to wear contact lenses, it is essential that you are under the care of a contact lens practitioner.

Copy of contact lens specifications
The hospital can supply a copy of your contact lens specifications once your condition has stabilised and you have adapted to the current prescription. This is usually after you have been reviewed in the clinic, wearing the lenses for a minimum of three months after issue.
What do I do if I have a problem with my contact lenses?
Please email contactlenses@moorfields.nhs.uk, phone 020 7566 2479, or ask when you attend the clinic for your booked appointment.

If you cannot wait until your next appointment, current patients of the contact lens clinic should phone the appointment clerks on 020 7566 2474/2711/2706 and request an urgent review appointment, which will be arranged for within two to four weeks.

Please note that there is no guarantee that you will be seen in the contact lens clinic without an appointment.

What do I do in an emergency?
In an emergency, for example if your eye suddenly becomes red, painful or your vision suddenly becomes worse:

- You should attend your GP or local ophthalmic casualty service.
- The A&E department at Moorfields will see casualties and, if necessary, will arrange an appropriate referral.

It is important to let the staff know if you are wearing an extended wear lens (i.e. regular overnight wear) or a bandage (therapeutic) contact lens.
What happens at Moorfields A&E?

- First, you will be assessed by an experienced ophthalmic-trained nurse at the reception.
- The nurse will determine who needs urgent attention. Please note only patients with an ocular emergency will be seen by the medical staff in A&E.
- Please note that A&E does not provide contact lenses or contact lens solutions.

Contact details

Contact lens orders:
- Email contactlenses@moorfields.nhs.uk
- Telephone 020 7566 2479, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
- Fax 020 7566 2471

Contact lens appointments:
Telephone 020 7566 2474/ 2711/ 2706, Monday to Friday, 8.45am to 4.30pm

Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
162 City Road, London EC1V 2PD
Phone: 020 7253 3411
www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline
Phone: 020 7566 2345
Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm, for information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.
Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to start their consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further. The PALS team can be contacted on 020 7566 2324/2325 or by email to pals@moorfields.nhs.uk. For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, please visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs.

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**Approved:** May 2011  
**Review date:** May 2012