Patient information – contact lens service

Care of your soft contact lenses

Please read all of the instructions carefully. You can also watch a video of this information on our website at http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/contact-lens-insertion-removal-and-care

- Always 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 – keep them short
- Work over a clean, flat surface
- Use saline solution to rinse your lenses and case – do NOT rinse them with tap water as this can cause eye infections
- To minimise the possibility of mixing your lenses up, it is a good idea to get into the habit of always inserting and removing the same lens first
- Do not shower/bath in your lenses
- Do not sleep in your contact lenses unless you have been advised to by your contact lens practitioner
- It is not recommended to swim with your contact lenses in due to the risk of infection from the water – prescription swimming goggles may be available, but please discuss this with your contact lens practitioner as other options may also be available

Lens insertion

1. Remove the lens from the storage case and ensure it is not damaged, particularly checking the edges for any damage
2. The lenses may be rinsed with sterile saline or Opti-Free Replenish prior to inserting them into your eyes
3. Ensure the lens is not inside out; when it is the correct way round, the lens is shaped like a cup (fig 1), but if it is inside out, it is shaped like a saucer, with the edges facing out
4. Place the contact lens onto the tip of your index finger of your dominant hand
5. Pull the lower lid down with the middle finger (of the same hand)
6. Draw the upper eyelid up with the fingers of the other hand
7. While firmly holding the eyelids, gently place the lens on the eye (fig 2)
8. Try to keep both eyes open when inserting your lenses and try not to blink.

9. When the lens is on your eye, close your eyes slowly and blink several times.

10. If you wear a lens in the other eye, repeat steps 1-9 for the second lens.

11. Discard the solution from your case, rinse the case with saline solution or Opti-Free Replenish and leave the case to air dry.

- Pull your lower lid down gently with your middle finger. Slide your contact lens down onto the white of your eye with the index finger of the same hand (fig 3).
- To remove the lens, keep the index finger on the lens and gently pinch the front surface with your thumb and index finger (never with your nails).

Lens removal
- When removing your lenses, you should follow the same routine each time to prevent mixing up your lenses.
- Keep your chin down and look upwards.

If the contact lens is a daily disposable lens, you should throw it away as soon as you have removed it from your eye.

If it is not a daily disposable lens, you must clean it before it is put into the storage case in order to remove the microbes and deposits that have built up on the lens during the day.

Lens cleaning
Always use the care system recommended to you in the clinic.

1. Place the lens into the palm of your hand and put two or three drops of
the cleaning solution (Oté cleaner) onto the lens

2. Rub the lens gently but firmly with the little finger of your other hand for approximately thirty seconds; turn the lens over and rub the other side

3. After rubbing the lens, it is essential to rinse it with saline solution or Opti-Free Replenish in order to remove the loosened debris and any remaining cleaner; rinse the cleaning solution off the lens by rubbing the lens between your thumb and forefinger

4. Fill the storage case with fresh Opti-Free Replenish solution and place the lens into the correct side of the storage case – this soaking solution must be changed on a daily basis

5. If you wear a lens in the other eye, repeat steps 1-4 for the second lens

6. Leave your contact lenses to soak overnight in the closed case or for a minimum of four hours

You may have been advised a slightly modified cleaning regime by your contact lens practitioner – if so, please follow these instructions.

Contact lens case hygiene
- Eye infections can occur due to poor lens case cleaning. On insertion of your lenses you must discard the solution from your case, rinse the case with saline solution or Opti-Free Replenish and leave to air dry
- The contact lens case should be replaced with a new one every month

Remember, a contact lens cannot go behind the eye. If you cannot relocate the lens, seek the advice of a member of the contact lens clinic or a local contact lens practitioner (optometrist or ophthalmologist).

If you wear make-up, you should insert the lenses before putting your make-up on and remove the lenses before taking your make-up off.

You may have been advised to use a different method to insert and remove your lenses – if so, please follow the instructions from the clinic.

It is vital that you attend your contact lens and eye exam appointments to maintain the health of your eyes.

Contact details
If you have any queries about the care of your contact lenses, please contact the contact lens clinic on 020 7566 2100 (Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm) or email contactlenses@moorfields.nhs.uk.

In an emergency, contact Moorfields’ specialist A&E or your local A&E department if you have an eye problem.
When to seek advice
If you experience pain, redness or loss of vision, you should telephone Moorfields Eye Hospital Direct for advice on 020 7566 2345 or attend your local A&E department or the Moorfields 24/7 A&E department which is open for emergency eye problems only for a further examination. Please do not wear your lens.

Moorfields’ PALS team can provide confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks
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 – see above for contact details. For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, please visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs.