

Sight Matters

FAQ Sheets

Soft Contact Lens Insertion & Removal

HANDLING YOUR LENSES

These points should be understood before using your soft contact lenses:

- ☑ Usually there is no marking on the lenses to indicate right from left. To ensure that they are not mixed develop the routine of always handling the right lens first.
- ☑ Your lenses can easily turn inside out. Some lens types are marked to help you identify the correct way. If your lenses are not marked to help you decide that they are right side out, you should check by using this test:

Flex the lens between your thumb and forefinger.

- If the edges curl in to meet between the fingers, the lens is the correct side out.
- If the edges flare away from each other over the finger tips, then it is inside out and must be reversed.



Right-way versus Inside-out

- ☑ The lenses retain their flexibility only when they are fully hydrated. To prevent them from drying out they must be cleaned and stored in the storage solution as quickly as possible after removal from the eyes.

If a lens accidentally dries out, carefully place it in the storage solution and soak it for more than 12 hours before wearing it again.

- ☑ Keep your hands clean and free from soap or hand cream when handling your lenses.
- ☑ Only use solutions recommended for your lenses. Do not substitute brands.
- ☑ Avoid contaminating your lenses with other substances (eg: cosmetics, hair spray, etc).
- ☑ Do not use eyedrops while the lenses are being worn, unless they are specifically intended for use with soft contact lenses.
- ☑ Fingernails should be kept shorter on your thumb

and forefinger. Long nails can easily damage your lenses.

PREPARATION

Correct hygiene is of prime importance. Before handling the lenses be sure to wash your hands.



Your eye health is important - don't take shortcuts

Your contact lenses must be cleaned and disinfected each time they are worn. They must also be stored in solution when not being worn to prevent them from drying out.

The daily cleaning procedure is carried out when the lenses are removed from the eyes BEFORE they are stored away. The solution in which your lenses are stored usually serves the dual purpose of both hydration and disinfection.

Before the lenses are inserted they should be rinsed to ensure that they are free of any loose debris. With some lens types a periodic extra cleaner will be used to help remove any deposits still remaining after daily cleaner use. (If this is necessary, your optometrist will explain the procedure for you).

INSERTING YOUR LENSES

Whether inserting or removing your lenses, always begin by washing hands thoroughly, making sure all soap residue has been rinsed away. Then...

- 1 For each eye, ensure that the contact lens is not inside out.

FAQ sheet: 00514

Last edited: 23/02/11

- 2 Flush the inside lens surface with your rinsing solution.
- 3 Place the lens on the tip of the index finger of your dominant hand.
- 4 Keep your chin well down and gaze straight ahead at a point at eye level.
- 5 Hold upper lid up with index finger of your non-dominant hand.
- 6 Hold lower lid down with middle finger of your dominant hand.
- 7 Place the contact lens on to your eye.
- 8 Close your eye momentarily. The lens will normally centre automatically but can sometimes require gentle manipulation with the lids to help centre it.
- 9 Repeat this procedure for the other eye.



REMOVING YOUR LENSES

- 1 Ensure that the lens is in the correct position on your cornea before attempting to remove it.
- 2 Hold your head erect and turn the eye to look upward.
- 3 Retract the lower lid with the middle finger and slide the lens down on to the white part of the eye with the index finger. (Do not lift your finger off the lens).
- 4 Using a gentle “pinch” squeeze the lens lightly between the thumb and the index finger. This will allow air underneath the lens to break the suction and allow the lens to be removed.
- 5 Repeat this procedure for the other eye.



CLEANING YOUR LENSES

The lenses must always be cleaned before they are stored away after use.

- 1 Place the lens in the palm of your hand and add a drop of cleaning solution
- 2 Using the tip of your right index finger, rub the lens on the palm of the hand with an across and back motion (rather than circular). Be careful not to touch the lens with your fingernails. Rub conventional lenses for at least 15 seconds; rub disposable lenses for 5 seconds.
- 3 If your lenses are not disposable, turn the lens inside out and repeat the rubbing process.
- 4 Turn the lens back the right way, rinse the lens and store away.

STORING & STERILISING

Your storage case has clearly marked compartments for right and left lenses and you will be shown how to place your lenses in them.

The storage solution serves to keep the lenses fully hydrated, which ensures that they remain wet and flexible.

Each time the lenses are stored away they must be disinfected. This is not a cleaning process, but a means of preventing the growth of bacteria on the lenses. (This is usually done by the use of a storage solution which has disinfecting properties, but is sometimes achieved by heat or other means).

You will be advised as to which solution or method is most appropriate for your lenses.

Whichever method is used, the solution must completely cover the lenses and be changed each time the lenses are worn. When you change the solution, the case should be rinsed thoroughly under running water.

Most solutions include a disposable case with each bottle. Discard the old case each time you open a new bottle.



Dirty cases are a source of contamination and infection

WEARING SCHEDULE

Some contact lenses cannot be worn all day initially. With these lenses, to enable your eyes to adapt gradually, it is recommended that your wearing times be restricted during the first few days.

You will be advised of your recommended wearing schedule when you collect your lenses. However, two points need to be emphasised:

- Adequate time should be allowed between removing your lenses and going to sleep, and between awakening and reinsertion, during your adaptation period. A minimum of 20 minutes is a good guideline.
- If your eyes ever become sore, the lenses must be removed immediately.

Once you have adapted to your lenses, you will be able to wear them for most of your waking hours.