

FACTSHEET

This fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professionals to make sure this information is right for your child. If you would like to provide feedback on this fact sheet, please visit: www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/fact-sheets/feedback-form.

Contact lenses and children - helpful hints from parents

Make sure that your hands are clean before handling the lenses. After you have washed your hands with soap and warm water, dry then using a clean towel. Remember – any residue from soap, lotion or chemicals may stick to your contact lenses and give rise to irritation, pain or blurred vision.

Sleep time

Special comfort drops for contact lenses can be bought from a chemist. At sleep time put one drop on the lens (while it is in the eye). This will help to moisten the lens and cornea and prevent the lens from becoming dry. If the eye becomes dry and itchy, babies and small children may try to rub the lens out. Comfort drops are also good for air conditioned or hot rooms or if it's windy outside.

Medicated eye drops often have preservatives, which can penetrate the lens structure. Only use eye drops recommended by your eye doctor.

If your child continues to rub their eyes, please use the eye shield that the hospital gave you after the operation. This may stop your child from rubbing the lens out. If your child continues to rub his/her eyes, please consult your ophthalmologist. It's a good idea to check your child's lens when they wake up. If you cannot see the lens in the eye the best place to look for the lost contact lens is in the bed, cot or clothes.

At bath time

Minimise contact with water. Help your toddler to practice shutting their eyes tight to avoid splashes in the bath. Be careful with soap and shampoo as they will sting the eyes.

Wrap-around sunglasses

Encourage your child to wear a hat and sunglasses for all outdoor activities. Good quality wrap-around sunglasses will offer protection from the sun, and help to prevent dust, sand or other materials entering the eye.

Swimming and Flying

Please take out the contact lenses before doing activities that involve contact with water, such as swimming or using a hot bath.. They may fall out under water or may become uncomfortable because they can absorb the chlorine or salt. Leave the lenses out for 2 hours after swimming.

Remove the contact lenses before flying, as the air in the cabin is usually very dry.

Do not let your child use contact lenses when around noxious fumes and smoke.

Contact lens carry case

Remember to always have fresh SALINE in a contact lens carry case with you when you go out. You will then have somewhere safe to store the lens if it needs to be removed or your child rubs it out.

The lens case itself must also be cleaned and replaced every 3 months.

After inserting lenses, clean the lens case with sterile contact lens solution after each use and leave it to air dry.

Red or irritated eyes

If your child experience any problems with his/her contact lenses, please remove the lenses and consult your eye doctor right away. Discomfort can be an early sign of a more serious complication and early treatment can have a significant impact on overcoming problems.

If the eye becomes red, or becomes weepy, take the contact lens/es out. Contact your ophthalmologist. A red or irritated eye may be due to:

- conjunctivitis (infection)
- torn contact lens
- corneal sutures rubbing the eye
- protein build up on the lens

Additional information for cleaning the lenses

- Cleaning of the lens is very important and parts of your cleaning system become less effective over time.
- Water is not to be used for rinsing contact lenses. Tap water contains chlorine, minerals and metal particles which can damage both the lenses and the eyes.
- Some cleaning solutions have to be neutralised afterwards before the lens can go back into the eye. Special neutralizer discs need to be replaced every three months with daily use and every six months otherwise. A sticker is enclosed for you to write the replacement date for the disc as a reminder
- Cleaning solutions cannot be reused, always use fresh solution
- Always check the expiry date on ALL the components of the cleaning system and DO NOT USE if out of date
- If at any time you think the contact lenses are causing irritation or are uncomfortable, remove them and consult your contact lens practitioner. If in doubt, take them out!
- Before you insert the contact lens into the eye, it is important to check the lens for any breaks or tears. Do not use a lens that is torn or damaged. This may scratch the eye.
- If you are using an AODISC® system, you must only use fresh AOSEPT® cleaning solution. Do not place AOSEPT® disinfecting solution directly into the eye. It must be neutralised with the AODISC® for a minimum of 6 hours before it is safe to go in the eye. We then recommend the lens is rinsed with fresh saline. The AOSEPT® cups should be kept clean by rinsing in hot water occasionally and left to air dry. The AODISC® should be removed when rinsing with hot water.

Other procedures

- If your doctor recommends protein removal as an extra cleaning step, you can do this at the same time as the other process overnight. Follow the product

instructions, but the lens will need to stay in the container overnight

- Before inserting the lens after protein removal, rub and rinse well with a Sterile Saline solution.

Remember:

- Always carry the contact lens carry case with fresh saline.
- If the eye becomes red or you are concerned, remove the lens/es.
- Always check expiry dates on the cleaning system
- Always check the cleaning solution is neutralised before putting the lens in the eye
- It is also important that your child is regularly checked by an eye professional to measure and evaluate the parameters of the cornea to ensure that the geometric curvatures of current contact lenses are correct.
- Any eye drops you use can interact with all types of contact lenses. It is best to avoid the use of eye drops while wearing lenses except for wetting drops recommended by your eye doctor.