



Supported by
PREVENT BLINDNESS FOUNDATION

**Queensland Eye Institute &
Prevent Blindness Foundation**

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Contact Lens Care





Why do I have to visit my optometrist for contact lenses?

The clear window at the front of your eye is called the cornea. It has no blood supply so it absorbs oxygen from the air and your tears. When you put a contact lens in front of the eye it forms a barrier to the passage of oxygen. The newest types of contact lenses provide an excellent flow of oxygen to the cornea so that it remains clear and healthy. Every patient is different and your optometrist is an expert at deciding which contact lenses are best for your eye.

Why is contact lens hygiene so important?

If not handled carefully, contact lenses can cause blinding eye infections. Follow these simple rules to keep your eyes as healthy and comfortable as possible.

1. Always follow the instructions given to you by your optometrist.
2. Wash and dry your hands before handling contact lenses.
3. Apply eye make up after you put your contacts in.
4. Contact lens cases should be left open to dry when you are wearing your contacts. They should be cleaned with contact lens solution, not water. Cases should be discarded and replaced every 3 months.
5. Contact lens solution is the only liquid you should use for cleaning your contacts. *Never use water or normal saline.* Only use a dedicated contact lens cleaning and storage solution that you have purchased from your optometrist. Replace your contact lens solution at least every 3 months or earlier if the packaging advises.

6. Never re-use the same solution in your contact lens case. The solution should be replaced daily, even if the lenses are not worn.
7. Replace your contacts regularly and consider changing to daily disposable contacts as they don't need to be cleaned and stored.
8. If your contacts are called monthly or two weekly disposables, this means that they must be thrown out one month or two weeks after they are opened – not just after 28 or 14 wears. So if you only wear your monthly disposables 2 times a week, you must still throw them out after 4 weeks.
9. See your optometrist or ophthalmologist **URGENTLY** if you experience any of the following
 - A very red or painful eye
 - Discharge from the eye
 - Reduced vision
10. Have “contact lens free time” each day and preferably one day per week and ensure you always have a pair of spectacles with a current prescription in case you can't wear your contact.
11. Never sleep in your contact lenses, not even for a short nap.
12. Never wear your lenses swimming, especially in a pool, spa or hot tub.
13. Your optometrist will only sell you high quality, properly stored contact lenses – not “seconds”, rejects, old stock or lenses that have been sitting in a hot humid warehouse for months. Beware of internet sites selling cheap lenses, your eyes are not worth the risk.
14. See your optometrist annually for a contact lens review to ensure that your lenses are the best fit, the most up-to-date model and the correct strength for your eyes.