INTRODUCTION TO CONTACT LENSES

Contact lenses can be a great choice for many people, whether you’re interested in an alternative to glasses or looking to wear contact lenses for sports or going out.

Around 3.6 million people in the UK enjoy the vast benefits of wearing contact lenses. With so many advantages, make sure you get the most out of your lenses by following some simple advice on lens wear and care.

This booklet contains all of the information you need to get started or refresh you on anything you may have forgotten since your last contact lens check-up.

If you have any questions about your contact lenses that are not covered in this booklet, please visit your local David Clulow Opticians where the Optometrist will be more than happy to help you.

It is also essential that you attend your aftercare appointments, whether you are experiencing any problems or not. It is important to have an aftercare appointment at least every 12 months or more often if necessary.
SOFT CONTACT LENSES

These are the most common type of lenses. They are extremely soft and have a high water content, making them very comfortable to wear. Soft lenses are most frequently described by how often they are replaced with a new pair. Replacement is usually daily, fortnightly or monthly and the majority are worn only during the day and removed at night.
Before placing your contact lenses on your eyes, you should check to ensure your lenses have not turned inside out when removed from their blister packs.

Use the diagrams below to help you.

**METHOD 1**
Correct – lens has an even cup shape
Incorrect – lens is shallower and more pointed at edges

**METHOD 2**
Correct – when lens is curled between fingers, lens curls inwards
Incorrect – when lens is curled between fingers, lens flips out onto finger tip

Inserting and removing your lenses is easy once you know how. Having been given a thorough explanation and hands on step-by-step help by the Optometrist, the following page is a reminder of the steps required.

Before you start, thoroughly wash and dry your hands prior to handling the lenses. Always apply the right lens first to avoid mixing them up and check the lens is not inside out as shown in the diagrams above.
INSERTION

1. Place the lens on the tip of your first finger of your most dominant hand, ensuring your finger is dry and the lens is slightly wet
2. Use your second finger of the same hand to pull down your lower lid
3. Use your first and second finger of your free hand to hold your upper eyelid, pressing your eyelashes against the eye socket
4. Place the lens gently onto the centre of the eye
5. Take your finger away from the eye but continue to hold your eyelids
6. Finally, slowly release the lower lid first, then the upper lid

REMOVAL

1. Concentrate on the reflection of your eye in the mirror
2. Move your head slightly forward, towards the mirror and dip your chin. Use the second finger of your dominant hand to pull down the lower lid
3. Use your first and second fingers of your free hand to hold the upper lid
4. Place your forefinger on the lens and pull it down towards the lower lid
5. Gently pinch the lens between your thumb and forefinger and remove the lens from your eye
6. If your lenses feel dry and difficult to remove, blink slowly several times to moisten lenses
7. Rub, rinse and store your lenses in the recommended solution before and after each use (except daily use lenses which should be disposed of after each use)
Rigid Gas Permeable lenses are smaller than soft lenses and less flexible. They take a little longer to adapt to, however after regular wear they will feel comfortable. These lenses may be recommended for specific eyesight conditions and eye shapes.

They are more durable than soft lenses and are usually replaced every 6 to 12 months. The range of gas permeable lenses is also extensive and the latest materials enable more oxygen to pass through to the eye than the previous ‘hard’ lenses. Most Rigid Gas Permeable lenses are worn daily and removed at night.
Before you start, thoroughly wash and dry your hands prior to handling the lenses.

Always apply the right lens first to avoid mixing them up. At your request, Rigid Gas Permeable lenses can sometimes be made with a mark to guide you.

**INSERTION & REMOVAL OF RIGID GAS PERMEABLE LENSES**

1. Place the lens on the tip of your first finger of your most dominant hand, ensuring your finger is dry and the lens is slightly wet
2. Use your second finger of the same hand to pull down your lower lid
3. Use your second and third finger of your free hand to hold your upper eyelid, pressing your eyelashes against the eye socket
4. Place the lens gently onto the centre of the eye
5. Take your finger away from the eye but continue to hold your eyelids
6. Finally, slowly release the lower lid first, then the upper lid
1. Open your eyes as wide as possible

2. Starting with your right eye, place the forefinger of your right hand in the outside corner of your eye as shown in the diagram

3. Moving horizontally, pull both lids firmly towards your ear

4. Cup your free hand under your eye and blink hard and fast. The lens should pop out into your hand!

5. Rub, rinse and store your lenses in the recommended solution before and after each use

---

**METHOD 2: LID PUSH**

1. Place forefingers of each hand on top and bottom lids at 12 and 6 o’clock positions, as close to the edges as possible

2. Hold eye lids apart to expose all of your eye

3. Firmly press lids against the white of the eye

4. Push lids in and together (as if trying to push lids under lens) The lens should come out between your fingers

5. Rub, rinse and store your lenses in the recommended solution before and after each use
How long you wear your lenses and how often you replace them are important factors in successful contact lens wear. Follow our Optometrists advice carefully and don’t be tempted to over-wear your lenses. You should also take precautions when showering, swimming, using hot tubs and for water sports. Make sure you take special care when travelling and take all lenses and solutions you need with you.
GENERAL ADVICE

DO

· Have regular check-ups as advised by the Optometrist
· Always wash and dry your hands prior to handling your lenses
· Rub, rinse and store your lenses in the recommended solution before and after each use (excluding daily lenses, which should be disposed of after each wear)
· Clean the lens case with the recommended solution and air dry your storage case while lenses are being worn
· Always apply the right lens first to avoid mixing them up
· Check the lens is not inside out before applying
· Handle carefully to avoid damaging the lens
· Insert your lenses before putting on make-up
· When removing make-up, remove lenses first
· Keep your eyes closed when using hairspray or other aerosols
· Replace your lens case every month
· Discard lenses and solutions that are past their expiry date
· Wear only the lenses specified by the Optometrist
· Adhere to the recommended wearing schedule and replacement frequency
· Make sure you have an adequate supply of replacement lenses or a spare pair
· Have an up-to-date pair of spectacles for when you need to remove your lenses

DON’T

· Use tap water, or any other water, on your lenses or lens case
· Wet your lenses with saliva
· Put a lens on the eye if it falls on the floor or other surface, without cleaning again
· Apply any torn or damaged contact lenses
· Continue wearing your lenses if your eyes feel or look abnormal
· Re-use or top-up solution – discard and replace with fresh solution each time lenses are stored
· Transfer solution into smaller containers
· Wear lenses left in the case for more than seven days without cleaning and storing them in fresh solution
· Sleep in your lenses unless specifically advised to by the Optometrist
· Wear any lens overnight if you are unwell
· Use your lenses for swimming, hot tubs, sauna or water sports, unless wearing goggles
· Wear your lenses in a shower
· Switch the solution you use except on the advice of the Optometrist
· Use any eye drops without advice from the Optometrist
· Share contact lenses or wear any lenses not specified by the Optometrist

Remember if you have any questions about your contact lenses you should consult your Optometrist for advice. Go to www.bcla.org.uk for more information on contact lenses. This information is designed to supplement the advice given to you by our Optometrist.
TROUBLESHOOTING

If you have a problem with your eyes or lenses, DO NOT wait for your next scheduled aftercare appointment.

If you experience any of the following symptoms remove your contact lenses immediately and consult one of our Optometrists for advice as soon as possible.

FEELING OF DISCOMFORT
REDNESS
EXCESSIVE WATERING
VISUAL DISTURBANCE

If any of our Optometrists are not available immediately and the problem is causing you severe discomfort you should consult your GP or go to Accident and Emergency at your local hospital.

In Central London a 24 hour casualty service is available from the following hospitals:

Moorfields Eye Hospital
City Road, London, EC1V 2PD (near Old Street)
Tel: 020 7253 3411

Western Ophthalmic Eye Hospital
Marylebone Road, London, NW1 SYE (near the flyover)
Tel: 020 3312 6666