



## UNDERSTANDING SOFT CONTACT LENSES



### ABOUT YOUR SOFT CONTACT LENSES

Your soft contact lenses are made of a unique hydrophilic plastic material which absorbs water. It is the presence of this water that makes your lenses soft and comfortable.

A number of these soft materials are available. Some contain more water than others, or are softer or more durable. Many are disposable. The type selected for you is the one considered to be the most suitable for your particular requirements.

Your lenses will be fairly easy to adjust to and will provide comfortable wear within a short time. However, good lens care habits are important in order to obtain maximum benefit and continued comfort. These habits will be developed by carefully following the instructions contained in this booklet. These instructions are general and may be varied at the time of dispensing to suit you personally.



### HANDLING YOUR SOFT CONTACT LENSES

These points should be understood before using your lenses.

- ① 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**.
- ① 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.



**CORRECT**



**INSIDE OUT**

- 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.

- ▶ Another method is place the lens on the tip of your finger and view its' shape from the side, as shown below.



**CORRECT**



**INSIDE OUT**

- ① 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.

- ① Only use solutions recommended for your lenses. **Do not substitute brands.**
- ① **Keep your hands clean and free from soap** or hand cream when handling your lenses.
- ① Avoid contaminating your lenses with other substances (eg: **cosmetics, hair spray**, etc).
- ① **Do not use eyedrops whilst the lenses are being worn**, unless they are specifically intended for use with soft contact lenses.
- ① **Fingernails should be kept shorter** on your thumb and forefinger. Long nails can easily damage your lenses.




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## CARE AND MAINTENANCE

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Correct hygiene is of prime importance. Before handling the lenses be sure to **wash your hands**. Your contact lenses must be **cleaned and aseptitized each time they are worn**.

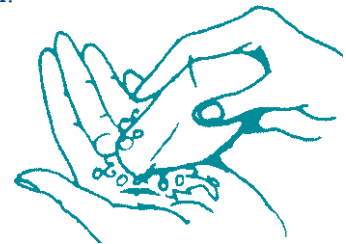
They must also be **stored in solution** when not being worn to prevent them from drying out.

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 aseptimization.

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 for you, the procedure will be explained and demonstrated for you.



*Your eye health is important -  
Don't take shortcuts  
with contact lens care*

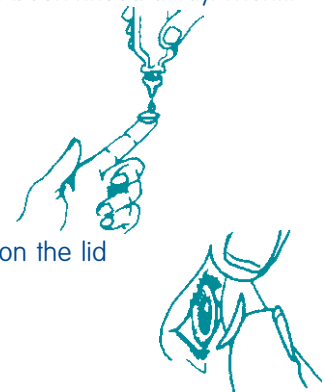
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## INSERTING YOUR LENSES

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Always begin by **washing hands thoroughly**, making sure all soap residue has been rinsed away. Then...

- ① Take the right lens out of the container and ensure it is **not inside out**.
- ② **Flush the inside 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 (holding on the lid margin).
- ⑦ Lift index finger upwards to **place lens on to the white part of the eye**.
- ⑧ **Slowly release the lid** and remove your index finger.
- ⑨ **Lift your head** while continuing to look at the same point at eye level. **Close your eye momentarily**. The lens will normally centre automatically but can sometimes require gentle manipulation with the lids to help centre it.
- ⑩ Repeat for left lens.





## REMOVING YOUR LENSES

- ① **Wash hands** thoroughly.
- ② Ensure that the lens is in the **correct position on your cornea** before attempting to remove it.
- ③ Hold your head erect and **turn the eye to look upward**.
- ④ **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).
- ⑤ **Squeeze the lens lightly** between the thumb and index finger. This will allow air underneath the lens to break the suction and allow the lens to be removed.
- ⑥ Repeat for left lens.



## CLEANING THE LENSES

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

- ① Place a drop of the cleaning solution on the palm of your left hand.
- ② Put the lens (convex side down) in the drop.
- ③ Using the tip of your right index finger, rub the lens on the palm of the hand using 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.



- ④ If your lenses are not disposable, turn the lens inside out and repeat the rubbing process.
- ⑤ Turn the lens back the right way, rinse the lens and store away.



## STORING & ASEPTICIZING YOUR LENSES

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 **asepticized**. 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 asepticizing 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.

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





## 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.

When they have adapted to their lenses, most people are able to wear them for most of their waking hours.



*Never sleep in your lenses  
unless your optometrist advises  
it is safe for you*



## ADAPTATION PERIOD

Whilst you are adapting to your lenses you may notice some of the following normal symptoms. However, advice should be sought if they persist:

- Watering of the eyes and increased blinking
- Dislike of bright lights
- Difficulty with reading
- Tension in the face or forehead
- Intermittent blurred vision
- Temporary blur with spectacles, after wearing the contact lenses
- One lens behaving better than the other
- Reflections from lights
- Occasional displacement of a lens onto the white of the eye
- Some difficulty in the judgement of sizes and distances

**IMPORTANT:** If any of the following symptoms occur, **take the lenses out immediately and seek advice promptly.**

- △ **Persistent redness** of the eyes, particularly if it lasts overnight
- △ **Soreness** or discomfort after lens removal
- △ **Discomfort** which persists after the lens has been removed, cleaned and reinserted
- △ **Severe pain** or **extremely red eyes**
- △ Abnormal **mistiness of vision**, sometimes accompanied by coloured rings seen around bright lights

*Use fresh storage solution  
every time your lenses are worn*



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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- When you collect your lenses you will be shown how to use them as described in this booklet. You will then be advised when to return for your **follow-up visits**. When returning for these subsequent consultations **be sure to insert your lenses at least 2 hours before-hand**.
- **Showering** with your lenses on is reasonably safe, but **swimming** presents a higher risk of losing a lens. In both cases you should keep your eyes closed when your face is immersed.
- The lenses require a normal tear supply and normal **blinking** to remain clear and comfortable whilst being worn.
- It is advisable to leave your lenses out when sitting **under a hairdryer** or directly in front of a fan or heater as these could dry the front surfaces of the lenses excessively. **Air flights** may cause similar dryness problems due to low humidity and long periods of reading can reduce your frequency of blinking to an inadequate rate for contact lens wear.
- Never continue to wear an uncomfortable lens that has become **torn or damaged**.
- If your lenses are **disposable**, be sure to discard them at the recommended time. Complications can occur when these lenses are worn too long.
- **Warning re Bifocal or Monovision Contact Lenses:** While these types of contact lenses provide good vision for both far and near, care should be taken in situations which require clear vision and good judgement of depth or distance. (For example: driving).
- **Your eye safety:** There is a danger to your eyes from the abuse of contact lenses. Please follow all the advice in this booklet and **be sure never to wear the lenses if your eyes are sore, infected or injured in any way**.