

Caring for your soft contact lenses

Other formats

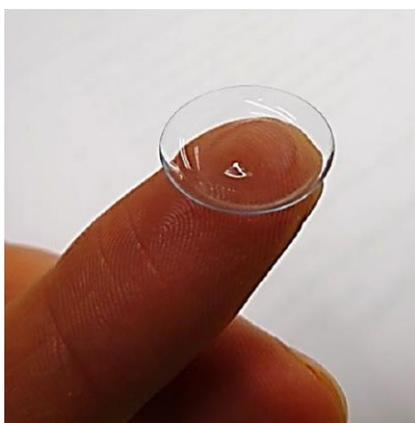
If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Why is it important to look after my contact lenses?

Contact lens wear increases your risk of an eye infection, which can be sight threatening. However, this risk can be minimised by following the instructions below.

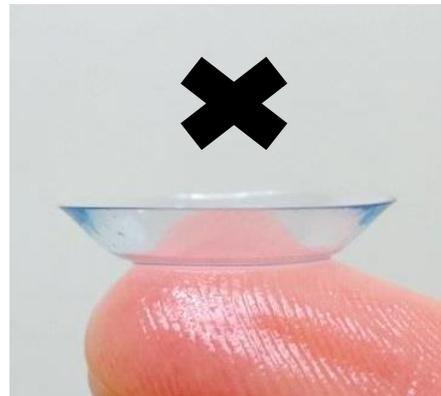
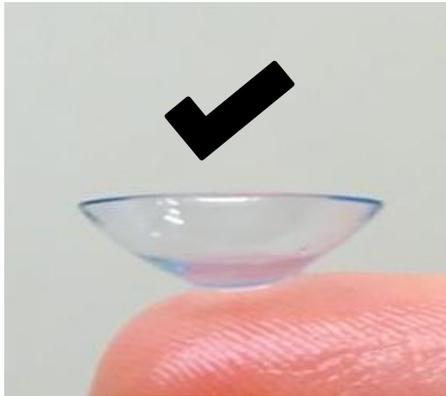
How do I insert my contact lenses?

1. Make sure you are in a well-lit room with a flat clean surface and a mirror. If working over a sink, put the plug in and place a towel over the sink.
2. Do not apply moisturiser or make-up before inserting your contact lenses.
3. **Always wash and dry your hands before inserting or removing your contact lenses.**
4. Carefully remove the contact lens from its case. Place the lens on your index finger of your right hand (or left hand if left-handed). Make sure the lens is on the centre of your fingertip.



5. Check that there is nothing on the lens and that it is not damaged (e.g. fluff from a towel or tears at the edge of the lens).

6. Check that the lens is not inside out. Look at the lens from the side. If it is the correct way round its profile will be cup or bowl-shaped. If it looks saucer-shaped, with the edges turning out, then the lens is inside out and it will need to be flipped over.



7. Pull your lower lid down with the middle finger of your right hand (or left hand if left-handed). Hold up the upper lid with the fingers of your other hand. Gently place the contact lens onto the coloured part of your eye. Slowly close your eyes and blink a couple of times.



8. Repeat for your other eye if you have been given contact lenses for both eyes.
9. Discard the solution left in the contact lens case. Rinse the contact lens case with some fresh multipurpose contact lens solution. Leave the case to air dry upside down on a tissue.

How do I remove my contact lenses?

1. You will need your contact lens case and contact lens cleaning solution. Make sure you are in a well-lit room with a mirror.
2. **Always wash and dry your hands before inserting or removing your contact lenses.**
3. Check your contact lens case is clean and dry. If it is not, rinse with fresh multipurpose contact lens solution and wipe it dry with a clean tissue.
4. Looking in the mirror, pull your lower lid down with the middle finger of your right hand (or left hand if left-handed). Hold up the upper lid with the fingers of your other hand.

5. Use the index finger of your right hand (or left hand if left-handed) to carefully slide the lens down off the coloured part of your eye. Gently pinch the lens off your eye with the fleshy parts of your right (or left if left-handed) index finger and thumb. **Do not use your fingernails for this.**



Alternatively follow the instructions given by your optometrist if they have instructed you to remove the contact lens with a different method.

6. Place the lens in the middle of your palm. Apply 2-3 drops of the multipurpose contact lens cleaning solution over the contact lens. Use your index finger to gently rub the lens with the solution in the palm of your hand for around 15-30 seconds. Flip the lens over, apply the solution again and rub for another 15-30 seconds.
7. Rinse the lens thoroughly with the multipurpose contact lens cleaning solution.
8. Place the lens into the contact lens and fill the case with fresh multipurpose contact lens cleaning solution.
9. Put the lid on the case and leave to soak for at least 4 hours. This disinfects the lens.

Warnings

- **Never use tap water to clean or store your lenses.** This greatly increases your chance of developing a sight-threatening eye infection.
- **Never swim or shower in your lenses.** This greatly increases your chance of developing a sight-threatening eye infection.
- **Do not wear your lenses longer than your optometrist recommends.**
- **Do not sleep or nap in your contact lenses.**

Wearing schedule

- You should wear your contact lenses for hours initially.
- This can be gradually increased to a maximum wearing time of
- The recommended multipurpose cleaning solution issued today is:

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- It is recommended that you consult with your optometrist first before changing your multipurpose cleaning solution.

Further advice

- It is a good idea to carry your glasses with you when you start wearing contact lenses in case you have to remove the contact lenses.
- Replace your contact lens case every month.
- Always keep the cap on the contact lens cleaning solution when it is not being used.
- If you do not wear your contact lenses for 30 days, clean and disinfect them again before wear.

What do I do if I am having problems with my contact lenses?

If the lens is uncomfortable, your vision has become blurred, or the eye has become red, **remove the lens** and contact:

- **Eye Clinic:** 01271 322647 (Monday – Friday 8am – 5.30pm)..
- **Optometry Department:** 01271 311714 (Monday – Thursday 8am – 6pm, Friday 8am – 5.30pm) Please note that the phone may not always be answered but if you leave a message we will contact you.
- **Emergency Department** (24 hours a day, seven days a week)

Further information

For more information on how to care for your soft contact lenses, please contact the Optometry department.

Alternatively, the websites below offer useful information on caring for your soft contact lenses:

Association of Optometrists

www.aop.org.uk/advice-and-support/for-patients/contact-lenses/soft-lenses

Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

www.moorfields.nhs.uk/content/contact-lens-insertion-removal-and-care

This website has a video demonstrating insertion, removal and cleaning of soft contact lenses

Look after your eyes

www.lookafteryoureyes.org/seeing-clearly/eye-wear/contact-lenses

References

Association of Optometrists (2017) *Advice if You Wear Soft Contact Lenses* available from: www.aop.org.uk/advice-and-support/for-patients/contact-lenses/soft-lenses [Accessed 19 Jun 2017].

College of Optometrists (2017) *Contact Lenses Available from:* www.lookafteryoureyes.org/seeing-clearly/eye-wear/contact-lenses/ [Accessed 06 Nov 2017].

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Wu, Y., et al. (2015) Contact Lens Hygiene Compliance and Lens Case Contamination: A Review. *Contact Lens and Anterior Eye* 38(5): 307-316.

Wu, Y, et al. (2015) The Effect of Contact Lens Hygiene Behavior on Lens Case Contamination. *Optometry and Vision Science* 92(2): 167-174.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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This leaflet was designed by the Communications Department.
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