This handout explains how to wear and care for your new contact lenses. If you have any questions, call us at 410-590-9260.

Successful contact lens wear depends on following our professional recommendations and practicing good lens care habits. If you do not, you may:

\*increase the chances of serious eye infection and injury

\* cause damage to your contact lenses

**Warnings:**

Immediately call us at **410-590-9260** if you experience persistent symptoms of any eye discomfort, watering, vision change or redness.

Be aware of the following:

**Extended wear**

**-** Do not wear your contact lenses overnight unless directed by Dr. Burroughs.

Overnight wear of contact lenses has been shown to increase the risk of certain serious contact lens related complications. The risk increases with the number of days in a row that lenses are worn between removals.

**Smoking**

**-** Smoking increases the risk of problems with contact lens wear. These problems are usually associated with drying of the lens and eye.

**Following directions**

- Follow exactly the instructions of Dr. Burroughs and the manufacturers' labeled lens care instructions for the proper use and care of your contact lenses and lens care products, including lens cases. Failure to do so may put you at serious risk of developing serious eye problems.

**Use proper lens care solutions**

- **Do not use saliva, tap water or homemade saline solution for any purpose in caring for your lenses.** The use of these solutions has been associated with serious eye infections including Acanthamoeba keratitis, a corneal infection which is resistant to treatment and cure.

**Adverse Effects/ Possible Problems**

-moderate to severe eye pain not relieved by removing the lens

-feeling of something in the eye

-unusual eye secretions

-eye redness

-sensitivity to light

-eyes burn, sting or itch

-eyes water

-reduced sharpness of vision

-rainbows or haloes around objects

-uncomfortable lens

-feeling of severe dryness

If you experience any of the above signs or symptoms, remove your lenses immediately. Identification of the problem and prompt treatment may help avoid serious eye damage.

**Immediately remove the lens**

1.If the discomfort stops, then look closely at the lens.

**-**If the lens is damaged in any way, DO NOT put the lens back in the eye. Place the lens in the case or discard, and contact our office.

-If the lens has dirt, an eyelash or other foreign matter on it, thoroughly clean, rinse and disinfect the lens, then reinsert. After reinsertion, if the problem persists, remove the lens and contact our office.

2. If discomfort continues after you have removed lenses,

-contact our office immediately.

- Do not insert a new or spare lens onto an eye that is red, irritated, or painful. A new lens may hide symptoms and delay treatment.

**When lenses should not be worn**

Contact lenses should not be worn under certain conditions to be determined by your eye doctor. These include:

-inflammation or infection in or around the eye or eyelids.

-excessive dryness of the eyes that makes contact lens wear uncomfortable

-any condition which reduces corneal sensitivity

-systemic diseases that may be affected by or impact lens wear

-allergic conditions, reactions or ocular irritation caused or exaggerated by lens wear or certain preservatives in lens care products

-the use of any medication, including some eye medications, that shouldn't be used with, or interferes with contact lens wear.

-if eyes become red or irritated

**General Guidelines for safe contact lens wear**

-Always clean, rinse, and dry your hands thoroughly before handling your lenses.

-Never use a lens if the container seal is broken, as damage or contamination may have occurred.

-Don't wear your lenses longer than recommended, no matter how comfortable they feel. Doing so increases the risk of adverse effects.

-Don't excessively rub your eyes while wearing lenses.

-Don't get water soap or shampoo in eyes during a bath or shower while wearing lenses.

-Hot windy conditions may dry out the lenses. (i.e. hair dryer, ceiling fan, open window)

-Always inform your doctor's and employer that you wear contact lenses. Contact lenses may not be used with certain medications or medical procedures, may not be suitable for certain occupations, or may require eye protection.

-Exposure to water while wearing contact lenses in activities such as swimmimg, water skiing and hot tubs may increase the risk of

 -eye infection, including but not limited to Acanthamoeba keratitis

 -damage to the lenses by chemicals in the water

 -loss of the lenses

**Storing your lenses**

-Store your lenses in the recommended solution when not being worn, Soft lenses are made of special materials that must be kept wet at all times to avoid damage from drying out.

-Always use fresh solution when storing your lenses. Previous used solutions can become contaminated and increase the risk of infection.

-Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the lens care system that has been recommended for you.

**When to remove your lenses**

-Remove your lenses for sleeping unless the lenses have been prescribed for overnight use. Not all people can wear lenses while sleeping. Sleeping with lenses on increases the risk of eye infection.

-Remove your lenses immediately if they become uncomfortable. Discomfort can be an early sign of a more serious problem. If the discomfort continues after lens removal, contact our office.

-Remove your lenses if you will be in the presence of irritating liquids, gases, chemicals, or smoke. Your lenses can become damaged by absorbing theses substances and irritate or injure your eyes.

**Cosmetic products and your lenses**

-Lens damage, eye irritation or infection may result if cosmetics, lotion, soap, cream, hair spray, deodorant, perfume, or aerosol products come in contact with your lenses. If sprays are used, close your eyes until the spray has settled.

-Apply make-up after lenses have been inserted to prevent debris from being trapped under the lenses.

-Do not use nail polish remover while wearing your lenses. The fumes could damage the lenses.

**Other eye care products and medications**

-Do not use eye drops, solutions, or medications in your eyes unless directed by your eye doctor. These solutions may damage the lenses or irritate your eyes. You may use rewetting drops while lenses are worn.

-Certain medications may cause blurred vision, lens dryness, or lens discomfort. These include antihistamines, decongestants, diuretics, muscle relaxants, oral contraceptives, tranquilizers, and motion sickness medications. Inform your eye doctor if you experience any problems with your lenses while taking these types of medications.

-Do not use solutions made for hard contact lenses, as they could damage soft lenses and result in eye complications.

**Lens placement on the eye**

This will be taught in the office prior to dispensing your trial or permanent lenses. If you should have any difficulty with insertion and removal of your contact lenses while at home, please call our office to schedule a refresher lesson.

**Replacing your lenses**

Always replace your lenses with a new pair as often as directed by your eye doctor. Lenses do deteriorate over time which results in decreased comfort and vision. It also puts you at increased risk of developing eye complications.

**Follow - up care**

Do not skip visits with your eye doctor just because your lenses feel comfortable. Routine follow-up visits help prevent problems. Only a thorough examination by your eye doctor can determine how your eyes are responding to the contact lenses. Early signs of a problem can be detected and treated before you can feel them.

**Lens care**

-Lenses should be cleaned, rinsed and disinfected each time they are removed from the eye prior to re-insertion.

 -**cleaning** loosens and removes accumulations of film, deposits, and debris that can cause irritation, and prepares lenses for disinfection.

 -**rinsing** removes cleaning and disinfection solutions and helps make your lenses feel more comfortable.

 -**disinfecting** kills germs that can cause eye infections.

 -failure to clean and rinse prior to disinfection may result in incomplete

 lens disinfection.

 -saline solutions are used to rinse, NOT to clean and disinfect.

-Do not alternate, change or mix lens care systems or solutions for any one pair of lenses unless specifically indicated in the product labeling. Different solutions cannot always be used together, and not all solutions are safe for use with all lenses.

-Follow all manufacturer's directions for cleaning and storing lenses.

**Care of the lens case**

Contact lens cases can be a source of growth for harmful organisms. These germs may be present even when the case looks clean. Putting lenses in a dirty or contaminated case makes the lenses unsafe to wear.

**Rinse lens case**

To prevent contamination and help avoid serious eye infection:

-always empty the lens case after putting the lenses on your eyes

-rinse the case according to the manufacturer's instructions.

**Replace lens case regularly**

Regular replacement will help prevent case contamination by germs which can be harmful to your eyes.

-Replace your lens case every 1-3 months.

- Fresh solution should be used each time the lens is placed in the case. Never add fresh solution to old solution since this can increase the risk of lens and lens case contamination.

**Other important information**

**Using rewetting drops**

-You may use rewetting drops with your contact lenses. i.e. opti free rewetting drops, aquify long lasting comfort drops, blink contacts lubricating eye drops

**If a lens dries out**

-If a lens is exposed to air while off of the eye it may become dry, brittle, and permanently damaged. If this should occur, discard the lens and use a new one to avoid possible irritation or injury to the eye.

**Caring for a sticking lens**

- If a lens sticks (stops moving) or begins to dry on the eye, apply a lubricating solution/ rewetting drop recommended for soft contact lenses.

- Wait until the lens begins to move freely on the eye before trying to remove it. If the lens continues to stick, contact our office immediately.

**Emergencies**

-if chemicals of any kind (household cleaners, gardening solutions, laboratory chemicals, pesticides, etc.) are splashed into the eyes:

 -Flush eyes immediately with tap water or fresh saline solution.

 -Remove the lenses and place them in the recommended storage solution.

 -Call us at **410-590-9260.**

These directions are an adaptation from Ciba Vision patient instruction booklet.