

Lenses can collect bacteria, fungi, and other germs if not cleaned correctly. Wearers are at risk of eye infections and corneal ulcers since contacts are worn directly on the eye.

Contact Lens Safety

Eye infections can cause:

- ▶ Pain.
- ▶ Blurred vision.
- ▶ Blindness.

How should you clean and store your contact lenses?

Safely cleaning and storing your contact lenses is the best way to prevent eye infections. Follow your eye care provider's and the maker's instructions.

1. Always clean hands before touching your eyes and contact lenses.
2. Remove the lens and place in the palm of your hand.
3. Rub the contact lens with solution for 5 to 10 seconds on each side.

4. Rinse the lens with a stream of solution. This helps to remove bacteria and deposits.
5. Store lenses in the proper storage case with fresh solution.
6. Rinse the empty case with fresh solution and allow to air dry. Never use tap water.
7. Replace your contact lens storage case at least once every 3 months.

Replace contact storage cases at least once every 3 months.

When should you wear contact lenses?

Most types of lenses are only worn while awake.

Contact lenses should **not** be worn when:

- ▶ Sleeping (some can be worn overnight*).
- ▶ Showering.
- ▶ Swimming.
- ▶ Using a hot tub.

*Some types of extended wear lenses can be worn when sleeping. Talk to your eye care provider about when to remove your contact lenses.

Never expose contact lenses to water.

If you wear contact lenses:

Always:

- ▶ See your eye care provider:
 - For regular exams.
 - To ask what products and solutions to use.
 - To ask when to replace your lenses.
 - If you have any problems with your eyes, vision, or lenses.
- ▶ Clean hands before touching your eyes and lenses.
- ▶ Use fresh, sterile solutions to clean and store lenses.

Never:

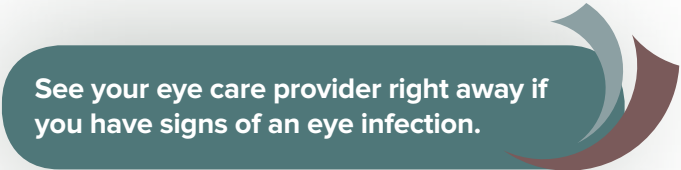
- ▶ Re-use lens solutions to clean or store lenses. Discard all solutions after use. Used solutions may have germs that can cause eye infections.
- ▶ Expose your lenses to water, including distilled, bottled, tap, lake, or ocean water. Water can contain germs that cause eye infections.
- ▶ Use saliva to wet your lenses.
- ▶ Transfer sterile contact lens solution to another container for later use.



What are signs of an eye infection?

- ▶ Discomfort.
- ▶ Excessive tearing or mucus.
- ▶ Unusual sensitivity to light.
- ▶ Itching.
- ▶ Burning.
- ▶ “Gritty” feeling.
- ▶ Unusual redness.
- ▶ Blurred vision.
- ▶ Swelling.
- ▶ Pain.

See your eye care provider right away if you have signs of an eye infection. Allergies can cause some of the same signs as an eye infection. Allergies usually affect both eyes equally. Some infections may affect only one eye.



See your eye care provider right away if you have signs of an eye infection.

Learn more:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

Parasites - Acanthamoeba; Contact Wearers

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/acanthamoeba/microbial-keratitis.html>

Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

Focusing on Contact Lens Safety

www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm048893.htm

Video on Contact Lens Safety

www.accessdata.fda.gov/videos/cdrh/contactlens.wmv

Ensuring Safe Use of Contact Lens Solution

www.fda.gov/forconsumers/consumerupdates/ucm164197.htm