



**FOCUSED  
EYE CARE**  
Milford | Nashua

**Milford**  
**81 Mont Vernon St.**  
**(603) 673-1330**

**Nashua**  
**505 W. Hollis St.**  
**(603) 882-0311**

**[FocusedEyeCareNH.com](http://FocusedEyeCareNH.com)**



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# **Contacts 101**

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**Daily Disposable Lenses**

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## Welcome to the world of wearing contact lenses!

Contact lenses are worn to correct vision, but also for cosmetic and therapeutic reasons. In the United States, all contact lenses (even purely purely cosmetic ones) are considered to be medical devices and require a prescription.

An eye examination is needed to determine suitability for contact lenses, and they must be properly fitted and prescribed only by eye care professionals, such as the doctors at Focused Eye Care.

Contact lenses are worn safely and comfortably by millions of people worldwide and have a long history of providing wearers with a safe and effective form of vision correction. Though contact lenses provide many vision benefits, they are not risk-free. Your Focused Eye Care professionals can help you better understand how to get the full benefits of your contact lenses and reduce your chances of developing problems.

## Daily disposable lenses are now the preferred contact lens type



Daily disposable lenses are the healthiest option for contact lens wear, because a fresh, sterile lens is inserted into your eye every day. You wear the lenses throughout the day, then remove and throw them away prior to sleeping.

With daily replacement, there is less chance for bacteria and protein deposits to build up on the lens. This reduces the risk for infection and lens discomfort. Daily disposable lenses are also convenient and hassle-free because there is no need to keep track of a monthly or bi-weekly replacement schedule as they are single-use lenses. This ensures that lenses are routinely replaced on time. Daily lenses make wearing contacts safer and easier!



## How to insert your soft contact lenses



**1.** Before handling your lenses, wash your hands thoroughly with mild hand soap, rinse completely, and dry with a lint-free towel. Soap containing lotions should not be used, as they will coat the lenses and may irritate your eyes.



**2.** Make sure you are working over a flat surface. Not over a sink!



**3.** Open the blister pack and carefully inspect your lens for any dirt, debris, nicks or torn edges. Never insert a



**Fig. 4**



**Fig. 5**

damaged lens. If dirt or debris is present, rinse the lens with multipurpose solution. You should never rinse your lenses with tap water.

- 4.** Place the lens on the index or middle finger of your dominant hand. Determine if the lens is in the correct orientation or if it is inside out. If necessary, flip the lens to the correct orientation. See Fig. 4 and Tips and tricks.
- 5.** Hold your upper lid securely with your non-dominant hand and pull down your lower lid with your dominant hand ring finger. See Fig. 5.



- 6.** Select a target and look straight at it with both eyes open.



- 7.** Place the lens squarely in your eye.



- 8.** Look at your finger to be sure that the lens is not stuck to it before you make any sudden movements. Look up, down, left, right to allow the lens to settle before blinking your eye.



- 9.** Repeat the procedure with the other lens.



- 10.** Wash your hands again after you are finished touching your eyes.





## How to remove your soft contact lenses



1. Before handling your lenses, wash your hands thoroughly with a mild hand soap, rinse completely, and dry with a lint-free towel. Soap containing lotions should not be used as it will coat the lenses.



2. Beginning with your right eye, look up and pull down your lower eyelid with the middle finger of your dominant hand.



3. Drag the lens either downward or to the side with your index finger while you look in the opposite

direction. For example, look upward while pulling the lens downwards.



4. Once the lens is on the white part of your eye, hold it there with your index finger and bring in your thumb to pinch it out gently.



5. Repeat with the second lens.



6. Properly dispose of both lenses then wash your hands again.



## Tips & tricks

- **Is your lens inside out?** A lens that is inside out will feel strange on your eye and your vision may be slightly blurred. If this occurs, or if you are not sure if the lens is inside out, remove the lens and inspect it on your finger. The lens should be bowl-shaped with the edges pointing slightly inward. If the edges appear to flare outward, it is likely inside out. If it is difficult to tell, just flip it the other way to see if it feels better!

Correct



Incorrect



- **Shorter fingernails** make insertion and removal easier and help prevent tearing or scratching of your lenses.
- **To avoid mixing up your lenses**, always perform insertion, removal and cleaning one eye at a time and start with the same eye each time.
- **If your eyes are dry**, your contact lens on them will also be dry, and if a soft lens dries while on your eye, the fit and vision with the lens may change. Under certain conditions, things such as air conditioning, wind, or the vents in your car may cause such drying. If this occurs, instill a drop or two of lubricating artificial tears. Drops that are preservative-free or those specifically designed for contact lenses are okay to use and are available at Focused Eye Care. Ask your doctor for specific details.
- **Lenses that are difficult to remove may be dry.** Put a lubricating drop into your eye (see above), completely dry your fingers, then try again. Make sure you are completely dragging the lens off the colored part of your eye before trying to pinch it out.

- **Put on contact lenses** before putting on makeup.
- **Remove contact lenses** before using any makeup remover or face wash.
- **Do not put eyeliner on the waterline** (edge of the eyelid above the lower eyelashes and below the upper eyelashes). This will completely block the oil glands that are needed to lubricate the ocular surface, causing irritation and dry eye symptoms.
- **If you are using any kind of sprays** (hairspray, face mists, deodorant, perfume), close your eyes and cover them with one hand during application. These sprays can easily coat and cloud up your lenses.
- **Avoid powders, glitters and clumpy/flaking products.** Debris from these products can come loose and get into your eyes. This can coat the lens surface and become trapped underneath your contact lenses, causing irritation. For a similar reason, avoid face cleansers that contain microbeads.

- **Replace makeup regularly (every 3 months)**, regularly clean makeup brushes and application tools, and do not share makeup products with others (especially mascara).
- **If you're struggling, you can also check out Doctor Eye Health** "Contact Lenses for Beginners" on YouTube for more tips and tricks.



**Don't worry!** Contact lenses cannot be physically stuck behind your eyeball. If you cannot find the lens, it most likely fell somewhere, though lenses can occasionally become trapped underneath your eyelid. Should that happen, and you are unable to remove it, call our office for assistance.

## Contact lens DOs

**Do** remove your lenses before bed every night.

**Do** check your contact lens for any dirt, debris, nicks or torn edges before inserting it into your eye.

**Do** replace your lenses on time, according to your prescribed wear schedule. Even if you wear contact lenses every day, always carry a pair of 'back-up' glasses.

**Do** remove your lenses before showering, swimming, or entering a hot tub.

**Do** always wear the contact lenses specifically fitted and prescribed for your eyes.

**Do** always use an approved multi-purpose solution or hydrogen peroxide cleaning system to properly clean and disinfect your lenses.

**Do** use the cleaning and care system recommended by you to your doctor.

**Do** remove the lens, rinse it, and reinsert it if dust or a foreign body gets under the contact lens. Do not just wait for a pain to go away.

## Contact lens DON'Ts

**Don't** sleep in your contact lenses unless specifically told to do so by a doctor.

**Don't** use a lens if it is damaged or if the sterile blister package it comes in is opened or damaged.

**Don't** 'stretch out' or wear your lenses beyond the prescribed wear schedule – serious complications may occur.

**Don't** expose contact lenses to any water.

**Don't** wear someone else's contact lenses purchased without a valid prescription for your eyes.

**Don't** ever use saline solution or rewetting drops to disinfect lenses. Neither solution is effective or approved disinfectant.

**Don't** use saliva or anything other than the recommended solutions for lubricating or wetting lenses; and do not put your lenses in your mouth.

**Don't** wear your contact lenses in an atmosphere where there is a lot of dust and grit in the air – wear your back-up glasses instead.



## Your wear time schedule

It is normal at first to feel the lenses on your eyes – you will become accustomed to this feeling over time. We recommend slowly building up wear time over the first week or so, to let your eyes adapt. The first day, start with about four hours, then increase by two hours each day until reaching full-day wear.

How long can you keep your contact lenses in each day? Most people can comfortably wear their lenses for about 10-12 hours. However, it is always best to remove your lenses an hour or two before bed at night to allow your eyes to breathe. Each person is different, so listen to your eyes. Your eyes should never hurt with contact lenses in.

**If your eye is feeling red, painful, irritated or something just does not seem right,** it is always best to remove your contact lenses and contact your eye care professional.

## Swimming in contact lenses

Swimming in contact lenses is not recommended. In fact, it is not advisable to expose your contact lenses to any kind of water, including tap water, swimming pools, oceans, lakes, hot tubs, and showers.

Water is home to various microbes, including bacteria and acanthamoeba, that are very harmful to your cornea. Contact lenses are porous and allow these pesky critters through. These microbes love the nice warm and moist space between the contact lens and your eye because it proves perfect conditions for them to grow and flourish. This can cause irritation, eye infections, and the potential for sight-threatening corneal ulcers. Don't take the chance!



## Cosmetics and contact lenses

Makeup oils can build up on the surface of contact lenses, causing distortion of the fit and prescription, as well as impacting the chemistry of the contact lens. They will affect the comfort of the lenses as well as your vision through them.

In general, steer clear of any oil-based cosmetic products. Look instead for gentle, water-based products that do not contain ingredients that will irritate your eyes.



## Properly disposing of contact lenses

- Never flush contact lenses down the sink or toilet – they end up in our wastewater and are likely broken down to form microplastics during wastewater treatment, which poses a significant threat to marine life.
- Either dispose of your lenses in the trash or recycle them:
  - Contact lenses, blister packs, and top foils are made with recyclable materials but are too small for standard recycling. However, these products can be recycled through [TerraCycle.com](https://www.terracycle.com). Focused Eye Care is a convenient drop-off location for the Bausch + Lomb “ONE by ONE” recycling program through [TerraCycle.com](https://www.terracycle.com). You can check their website, at [TerraCycle.com](https://www.terracycle.com) to find other participating recycling centers near you.
  - Cardboard contact lens packaging, contact lens cases, and solution bottles can be recycled through standard recycling bins.

## Annual checkups are required

Now you have been fitted with contact lenses. Great! But what happens after? By law in New Hampshire, contact lens prescriptions expire annually. Each year your Focused Eye Care doctor will perform an eye exam to check the health of your eyes, along with a Contact Lens Evaluation which ensures that you are safely wearing your contact lenses before renewing your prescription.

Contact lens patients require additional testing and monitoring during their annual exam beyond what is done in a routine eye exam. It is very important that you wear your contact lenses to your annual exam.

**Once your contact lens prescription is finalized**, it will be made available to you through our online portal or a printed copy.

**If you have any questions or cannot access your prescription**, please contact our Nashua office at (603) 882-0311 or our Milford office at (603) 673-1330.

## Why buying contact lenses without a prescription is illegal

Contact lenses are medical devices, regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for high risk of sight-threatening complications with improper use. Contact lenses must be closely monitored by a licensed eye care provider to ensure the proper fit of the lenses and to monitor the eye's response to lens wear. This includes colored or costume lenses, even if they do not correct vision. Lenses that fit poorly or do not allow enough oxygen through the cornea can cause corneal tissue to suffocate, leading to complications.

Your contact lens prescription specifies the lens brand, power of the lenses, and particular fit parameters, including the curvature of the lens and the diameter. These numbers are not interchangeable from lens brand to lens brand. Each lens brand needs to be assessed on your eye for proper fit, and your eye health needs to be monitored over time as you wear the lenses.

## A final note

With a proper exam, assessment, prescription, fit, and annual follow-up by your Focused Eye Care doctors and professional staff, you should enjoy a long life of better vision with contacts.

Even if everything is done right, sometimes contact lens-related infections still do occur. If you experience redness of the eye, eye pain or discomfort, excessive tearing, light sensitivity, discharge from the eye, or vision changes, remove your contact lenses immediately and call our Focused Eye Care Nashua office at (603) 882-0311 or our Milford office at (603) 673-1330. There is always a doctor on-call after hours, should an eye emergency occur.

**Happy wearing!**

## This booklet belongs to:

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## My contact lens particulars

I have been fit to: \_\_\_\_\_

Replace my lenses: \_\_\_\_\_

Rinse/clean my lenses with: \_\_\_\_\_

My initial wear schedule is:

Day 1: 2 hours

Day 2: 6 hours

Day 3: 8 hours

Day 4: 10 hours

Day 5+: Full day (10-12 hours)

## My follow-up visit is on:

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