

# Contact Lens Safety Guide

## Love Your Lenses, Protect Your Eyes

Safe contact-lens use requires an eye exam and proper fitting by a qualified specialist. Following good hygiene, maintenance, and storage practices helps prevent serious infections, including those that can lead to vision loss. **These tips support safer habits but do not replace professional care. If your eyes feel uncomfortable or change in any way, contact your eye care provider as soon as possible.**



### DO NOT (High-Risk Behaviors)

- Do NOT sleep with contact lenses (CLs)
- Do NOT shower, bathe, swim, or expose CLs to water
- Do NOT clean or store CLs with tap water or saline
- Do NOT skip CLs and case hygiene rules
- Do NOT keep CLs or cases longer than recommended
- Do NOT skip regular eye check-ups



### Avoid Any Kind of Water with Contact Lenses (CLs)

- Do not shower, swim, bathe, or engage in any water activities while wearing CLs (including tap water, fresh water, sea water, or chlorinated water)
- Avoid wearing CLs in hot tubs, saunas, or steam rooms
- Never rinse CLs or their case with tap or mineral water and never store CLs in water
- Wash and dry your hands fully before handling your CLs or their case
- Avoid storing your CLs or lens case in the bathroom, as this increases the risk of contamination from tap water
- Water can carry microorganisms that stick to CLs and cause serious infections



### IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

**Goggles do not eliminate the risks of water exposure for contact lens wearers.** Always remove CLs before swimming or water activities. If you must wear lenses for a specific activity, use daily disposable CLs and remove them immediately afterwards — this reduces risk but does not make water exposure safe.



### Practical Tips

- Avoid handling CLs after using creams, oils, or oily soaps, as these can contaminate the CLs and irritate the eye
- Be careful with long or artificial nails, which can damage the CLs or increase the risk of contamination
- Make sure you use the correct CLs for each eye (right and left), and check they are not inside out before inserting
- If CLs bend or become damaged during handling, do not use them — they may cause irritation or infection
- Take extra care in dusty, sandy, or windy environments; ask your eye care professional whether you should stop wearing CL or use protective glasses



### Clean your Contact Lenses Correctly

- Use only the recommended CLs solutions for rinsing, cleaning, and disinfecting
- Never mix different solutions or reuse solutions that are expired or have already been used
- Replace opened solution bottles every 3 months
- Ask your eye care professional which cleaning and disinfection system is safest and most effective for you
- Avoid all-in-one solutions unless specifically advised by your eye care professional, as some may not disinfect effectively — especially against Acanthamoeba
- Saline is not a cleaning or disinfecting solution and should never be used
- Never use water or saliva on your CLs or their case
- Choose daily disposable CLs when possible



### Care of your Contact Lenses Case

- Do not reuse or top off old solution — always use fresh solution in a clean case
- Empty, rinse, and air-dry the CL case upside down daily. Once completely dry, fill it with fresh solution before use
- Replace your CL case at least every 3 months
- Use a CL case with separate compartments to avoid cross-contamination
- Never leave your CL case open or your CL exposed in the bathroom - Tap water, moisture, mist, and aerosols can contaminate them



### Give Your Eyes a Break

- Limit daily wear to 8–10 hours unless your eye care professional advises otherwise
- Remove CLs before sleeping or taking a nap
- Never sleep in daily disposable CLs — not even for a short nap
- Avoid wearing CLs when you are unwell, as a weakened immune system increases infection risk

## Regularly Replace Contact Lenses

- Do not over-wear your CLs — prolonged use can damage your eyes
- Consider daily disposable CLs if possible
- Have your CLs checked regularly by an optometrist, ophthalmologist or eye care professional

## Purchase and renewal of Contact Lenses

- Buy CLs only with a valid prescription and from a licensed optometrist or eye doctor
- CLs are medical devices and buying them without a proper fitting can cause serious, irreversible eye damage
- Apply these safety tips to all types of CLs, including cosmetic or costume lenses (Halloween, Carnival, or Theatre)
- Never share CLs with other people

## Precautions for When You Go Out or Travel

- When traveling or away from home: always carry spare glasses, fresh solution, and a clean CL case, and make sure to maintain proper lens hygiene
- It is important to avoid bathing or exposing your lenses to any type of water (including tap water, fresh water, sea water, or chlorinated water)
- Keep your glasses prescription up to date
- Keep the contact information of a local eye clinic or emergency eye-care service easily accessible if needed

## Contact lenses and Makeup

- Insert CLs before applying makeup and remove CLs before removing makeup
- Replace eye makeup every 3 months to reduce infection risk

## Eye Drops and Artificial Tears

- Use lubricating eye drops (artificial tears) regularly when wearing CLs
- Only use eye drops that state they are compatible with CLs
- Single-dose eye drops are preferable
- Inform your eye doctor if you are taking any medications that may affect your eyes

## Pay attention to symptoms

- Remove CLs right away if you feel something in your eye, have pain, light sensitivity, redness, or vision changes — even if mild
- Contact your eye doctor straight away
- Bring your CLs and case for testing without cleaning them, and report any water or dirt exposure
- Avoid using steroid eye drops until an infection-related keratitis has been ruled out, as steroids can worsen possible bacterial, fungal, or amoebic infections
- If symptoms do not improve within 2–3 days, or if they worsen, ask about involving a Corneal specialist experienced in AK. You can also ask whether In Vivo Confocal Microscopy might help confirm or rule out an amoebic or fungal infection

Clinically reviewed by Dr. Thomas Steinemann, ophthalmologist



### Contact Lenses Care Tracker:

Keep track of important dates to help protect your eyes and prevent infections.

- **Next Eye Appointment:** .....
- **Current Contact Lenses started:** .....
- **Solution Opened:** .....  
*(replace every 3 months)*
- **Case Changed:** .....  
*(replace every 3 months)*
- **Eye Makeup Replaced:** .....  
*(replace every 3 months)*



Suggestion: Set reminders on your phone or calendar to help you stay on schedule!



Acanthamoeba Keratitis (AK) Eye Foundation  
Information: [www.akeyefoundation.com](http://www.akeyefoundation.com)

ENG STCL 05/26



**CL + H<sub>2</sub>O = AK**  
Contact Lenses + Water = Acanthamoeba Keratitis