

# Contact Lens Safety Guide

## Love Your Lenses, Protect Your Eyes

These tips can help protect your eyes from serious infections, including those that may cause vision loss. They're here to support safer habits, but they don't replace professional care. If something feels off or your eyes change in any way, please contact your eye care professional.



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

- **Do not** shower, swim, bathe, or engage in any water activities while wearing CLs (fresh, sea, 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 lenses in water.
- **Wash and dry your hands fully** before handling your CLs or their case.
- **Do not leave** the case open or your CLs exposed in the bathroom. Avoid storing CLs or their case in the bathroom or near a faucet.
- **Water can carry microorganisms that stick to CLs and cause serious infections.**



**Goggles do not make water exposure safe** 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 afterward** — this reduces risk but does not make water exposure safe.



### Clean your CLs Correctly

- **Use only** the recommended CL solutions for rinsing, cleaning, and disinfecting.
- **Replace opened solution bottles** every 3 months.
- **Avoid all-in-one solutions** unless specifically advised by your eye care professional, as some may not disinfect effectively — especially against Acanthamoeba.
- **Ask your eye care professional** which cleaning and disinfection system is safest for you.
- **Saline is not** a cleaning or disinfecting agent.
- **Never use water or saliva** on your CLs or their case.
- **Choose daily disposable CLs** when possible.



### Care of CL Case

- **Never “top off”** old solution — always use fresh solution in a clean case.
- **Empty, rinse, and air-dry** the case daily using fresh CL solution.
- **Replace your CL case** at least every 3 months.
- **Use a case with separate compartments** to avoid cross-contamination.



### Give Your Eyes a Break

- **Limit daily CL wear:** Ask your eye care professional about your maximum recommended wearing time—or stick to no more than 8–10 hours per day.
- **Remove** the CLs before **sleeping** or taking a nap.
- **Never sleep in daily disposable CLs** — not even for a short nap.
- **Avoid wearing CLs when you're unwell:** A weakened immune system can increase the risk of serious eye infections.



Contact Lenses + Water = Acanthamoeba Keratitis



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



## CL Purchase Tips

- Buy CLs only from a licensed optometrist or eye doctor — CLs are medical devices. Buying them online or without a professional fitting can cause serious and permanent eye damage.
- Apply these safety tips to all types of CLs — including cosmetic or costume lenses used for Halloween, fashion, or theatre.
- Never share CLs with others.



## Regularly Replace CLs

- 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 ophthalmologist, optometrist, or eyecare professional



## Be Prepared

- Carry backup glasses, fresh solution, and a clean CL case when you're away from home.
- Keep your glasses prescription updated.
- Have the phone number of a leading eye clinic available in case of urgent problems.



## CL and Makeup

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



## Pay attention to symptoms

- Remove CLs immediately if you experience foreign body sensation, eye pain, light sensitivity, redness, or vision changes — even if symptoms seem mild.
- Contact your eye doctor straight away.
- Bring your CLs and case to the doctor for lab testing — do not clean them. Let your doctor know if the lenses were exposed to water or dirt.
- Avoid steroid eye drops until Acanthamoeba Keratitis (AK) has been safely ruled out — steroids can worsen a possible AK infection.
- If symptoms do not improve within 2–3 days, or if they worsen, ask about involving a cornea specialist experienced in AK. You can also ask whether an In Vivo Confocal Microscopy might help confirm or rule out AK.



## Contact Lens Care Tracker:

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

- Next Eye Appointment: .....
- New Contact Lenses Since: .....
- Solution Opened: (Every 3 months) .....
- Case Changed: (Every 3 months) .....
- Eye Makeup Replaced: (Every 3 months) .....



**Tip:** Set reminders in your phone/calendar to help stay on schedule!

Clinically reviewed by Dr. Thomas Steinemann, Ophthalmologist



CL + H<sub>2</sub>O = AK

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