



Contacts: They're for Kids, Too

Find out more about what they've been asking for.

The most common eye problems in children are refractive errors—defects in the way the eye focuses light on the retina—which includes myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness) and astigmatism. These problems can almost always be corrected with eyeglasses or contact lenses. Yet despite new research that confirms that soft contact lenses have no effect on how or if nearsightedness progresses (typically it develops around age 8 and worsens until age 15 or 16), nearly one-third of parents never consider contact lenses for their children.

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Some children as young as 8 are capable of wearing and even caring for contact lenses. In fact, most kids who try contacts find them a comfortable option and prefer them over glasses.

Studies show that children who wear contacts:

- Feel better about their physical appearance, athletic ability and social acceptance compared with their peers who wear glasses
- Can improve academic confidence, especially in children who are unhappy with their glasses and do not wear them regularly at school or to study
- Show an improved sense of self-confidence and self-worth, particularly girls

Is my child a good candidate for contacts?

The most important non-medical factor is whether or not your child wants to wear contacts and if he/she is mature enough to take care of them. While you can help answer those questions, your eye doctor also needs to determine whether any underlying eye conditions might interfere with a successful shift to contacts.

If your child is a candidate for contacts, you'll find the fitting process is similar to that for adults. This process includes selecting a lens that maximizes comfort, health and visual correction, and thorough training on lens insertion, removal and care. As your child adapts to wearing contacts, maintaining general eye health plays an important role. Your child should have regular eye exams, and you should always inform your eye doctor about any contact- or eye-related problems.

To learn more and to find an eye doctor in your area,
visit: www.eyesiteonwellness.com



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Questions to ask your child's eye care doctor:

1. Are contact lenses appropriate vision correction for my child's vision problem?
2. Is my child old enough to use contact lenses?
3. What type of contact lenses would be best? Both gas permeable and soft contact lenses are options for children, depending on the vision correction.
4. What is involved in caring for contact lenses?
5. How can I help my child properly maintain his or her lenses?
6. Are contacts with UV block an option?

Helping your child maintain his/her contacts.

Disposable soft contacts (both the daily disposable and reusable varieties) are a popular choice for children. Reusable contacts need to be discarded and replaced regularly, as directed by your eye doctor. Marking it on the family calendar can help, especially at first. To give your child time to adjust to a new routine, daily disposable contacts are another great option. Daily disposable contact lenses eliminate the need for daily cleaning and can help prevent the habit of "stretching" contact lenses beyond the replacement schedule prescribed by your eye doctor. Stretching can lead not only to discomfort but also other eye-related problems when the recommended wear and replacement schedule is exceeded.

Article information courtesy of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care Inc., makers of ACUVUE® Brand Contact Lenses. Visit www.acuvue.com for more information.

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WARNING: UV-absorbing contact lenses are NOT substitutes for protective UV-absorbing eyewear such as UV-absorbing goggles or sunglasses because they do not completely cover the eye and surrounding area. You should continue to use UV-absorbing eyewear as directed. NOTE: Long-term exposure to UV radiation is one of the risk factors associated with cataracts. Exposure is based on a number of factors such as environmental conditions (altitude, geography, cloud cover) and personal factors (extent and nature of outdoor activities). UV-blocking contact lenses help provide protection against harmful UV radiation. However, clinical studies have not been done to demonstrate that wearing UV-blocking contact lenses reduces the risk of developing cataracts or other eye disorders. Consult your eye care practitioner for more information. Important information for contact lens wearers: An eye care professional will determine whether contact lenses are right for you. Although rare, serious eye problems can develop while wearing contact lenses. To help avoid these problems, follow the wear and replacement schedule and the lens care instructions provided by your eye doctor. Do not wear contact lenses if you have an eye infection or experience eye discomfort, excessive tearing, vision changes, redness or other eye problems. If one of these conditions occurs, contact your eye doctor immediately. For more information on proper wear, care and safety, talk to your eye care professional.

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