- Contact lenses

CONTACT LENS RISKS

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Why Proper Care Matters

CONTACT lenses have become a popular choice not only among individuals with vision problems but also for those who want to enhance their appearance with attractive colour options.

Contact lenses are seen as a modern alternative to glasses because they are more practical, lightweight, and do not affect one's appearance. However, despite their advantages, wearing contact lenses requires careful maintenance. If not properly cared for, they can pose various risks to eye health and, in severe cases, may even lead to permanent vision loss.

One of the main risks of improper contact lens care is eye infection. Lenses that are dirty or not cleaned properly can become breeding grounds for bacteria, fungi, and parasites. When these microorganisms enter the eye, they can cause serious infections such as keratitis, which is an inflammation of the cornea. Individuals affected may experience severe pain, redness in the eyes, blurred vision, and light sensitivity. In extreme cases, the infection can leave scars on the cornea, permanently affecting vision.

In addition to infections, wearing contact lenses for too long without breaks can also lead to dry eyes. This is because lenses can block oxygen from reaching the surface of the cornea. When the eyes are deprived of oxygen, they can become dry, itchy, and feel gritty. If left unaddressed, this can cause corneal damage and blurred vision. Therefore, contact lens users are advised not to wear lenses beyond the recommended duration, usually between eight and ten hours a day, depending on the type of lens.

Moreover, habits such as sleeping or showering while wearing contact lenses further increase the risk of infection. During sleep, the eyes receive less oxygen, which accelerates bacterial growth on the lenses. Similarly, water used during bathing or swimming may contain bacteria that can attach to the lenses and cause infection. Users should therefore remove their lenses before engaging in such activities to avoid unnecessary risks.

Another common mistake is failing to replace lenses or cleaning solutions according to the recommended schedule. Many users tend to use lenses beyond their expiry date or reuse old cleaning solutions to save costs. However, this practice is extremely dangerous because old lenses lose their quality, become rough, and are more likely to harbour bacteria. Cleaning solutions are only effective for a certain period and should not be reused.

To avoid these risks, contact lens users must practise proper and consistent lens care. Lenses should be cleaned with a specialised solution after each use and stored in a clean, tightly sealed case. The storage case should also be replaced regularly and cleaned at least once a week to prevent bacterial growth. Users should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and dry them before handling lenses to ensure hygiene.

In conclusion, wearing contact lenses is not just about appearance, it is also a responsibility toward eye health. Negligence in lens care can lead to serious complications that are difficult to treat. Therefore, users must follow all care instructions provided by optometrists and not ignore early warning signs such as redness, irritation, or blurred vision. Eyes are a precious gift, and proper contact lens care ensures that this gift of sight remains healthy and intact for a lifetime.

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