SWANSON EYECARE

Contact Lens News

From the Doctor . . .

"Many of today's contact lenses are made from a new generation of material, known as silicone hydrogel. This exciting break-through in contact lens technology allows lenses to breathe better, stay cleaner, and provide exceptional clarity. This material, along with the new generation of cleaning solutions available today, is making it easier for most people to wear contact lenses successfully."

Craig Swanson, O.D.

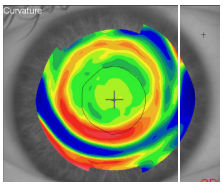
In this Issue:

Daily Disposable Lenses Provide Exceptional Convenience and Maximize Eye Health

If you're like many contact lens wearers, you would probably say that your contact lenses feel great when you first put them in. As the lenses get older however, most individuals notice that the comfort decreases. This is mainly due to the daily build up of protein from your own tears on the lens surface. As deposits increase, the risk for ocular health problems also increases. Dirty lenses can lead to eye infections or lid problems like giant papillary conjunctivitis, also known as GPC. Unfortunately, there is no way to remove all of the build-up from your lenses, even with meticulous daily cleaning. As a result, the average individual spends between $80 and $100 each year on contact lens cleaning solutions. Fortunately, many manufacturers have now developed single wear lenses, also referred to as daily disposables. Daily disposables offer the ultimate in convenience and cleanliness, as you get to wear a new lens everyday! Daily disposables are available in most prescriptions and in many cases are less expensive than traditional two week or monthly disposables. Ask our staff if you might be a candidate for daily disposables!

Computerized Topography Provides Comprehensive Corneal Analysis

Corneal Topographer



Digital map of the cornea

Our office uses advanced computerized corneal topography to assess the shape and condition of the cornea during contact lens fittings and evaluations. The corneal topographer uses digital imaging to measure 14,000 separate data points on the surface of the eye. Using a computer we then use the data to map-out the exact shape of the cornea, thus showing every unique contour and irregularity. Topography is the most advanced way to evaluate many problems that can affect your cornea, like swelling and scarring from injuries or contact lens wear. Corneal topography can also be used to tell if you are a good candidate for LASIK eye surgery.

With the use of corneal topography we are also able to offer a new type of contact lenses, known as *Wave Lenses.* In fact, we are one of only a few offices in the State of Michigan to offer the advanced technology and capability of Wave Lenses. Unlike regular soft and hard lenses that are fit using a single average curvature measurement from your cornea, custom Wave lenses use thousands of data points from across your entire cornea to create a multi-curved rigid lens that matches your eye's surface. Patients that wear *Wave Lenses* report better comfort and vision than with traditional contact lenses. *Wave Lenses* are available in most prescriptions, including astigmatism and bifocal designs. For more information about custom *Wave Contact Lenses*, call our office or visit www.wavecontactlenses.com.

Hydrogen Peroxide-Based Solutions Provide Best Protection Against Eye Infections for Contact Lens Wearers

One of the most common questions that we receive is whether or not all contact lens solutions are the same. The answer is that they are *not* the same. While all of the lens solutions sold have passed FDA requirements for disinfecting, some are more effective at killing bacteria than others. Some also kill fungi and amoeba-type organisms.

To adequately clean lenses, one-step multi-purpose solutions have a soap-like additive as well as a chemical to kill bacteria. The soap and chemicals can cause eye irritation and dryness. In addition, if the manufacturer's directions for cleaning *and rinsing* the lenses are not followed carefully, some one-step solutions may not be able to effectively kill bacteria and/or other organisms. Due to chemical interactions, some solutions are not compatible for use with all lens materials and will actually discolor or cause lenses to film-up. Peroxide-based systems such as ClearCare and AOSept use a form of hydrogen peroxide to disinfect lenses before being neutralized into preservative-free saline solution. Peroxide systems generally clean and disinfect lenses better and allow for the best lens comfort. In clinical studies, not only did peroxide-based systems provide the best overall disinfecting, they were shown to have the best compatibility with all lens materials, and were generally preferred by patients for comfort.

What about generics? In most cases, generic solutions are older versions of name brand solutions. These older formulas may not be FDA approved for use with all lenses, may not be as effective at disinfecting, and may be more likely to cause dryness and redness. Remember, all solutions *are not* the same and using the wrong type of solution may lead to reduced wearing time and may increase your risk for dryness, redness, damaged lenses, and/or infections. We recommend that you use the solution recommended by your eye doctor.

Minimizing Risks from Contact Lens Wear

Having any foreign object in the eye increases the risk for abrasions and infections. If a contact lens is not fitting properly it can cause problems. Lenses that are too loose can scratch the eye. Tight lenses can shut off oxygen to the cornea and reduce tear flow to the corneal surface, leading to dry eyes, inflammation of the cornea (keratitis), abrasions, infection, ulcers, scarring and even blindness. Chronic irritation or lack of oxygen can cause abnormal blood vessels to grow into the cornea. Sleeping in lenses increases the risk for eye infections and ulcers. Swimming in lenses, using a hot tub, or cleaning with tap water increases the risk for infection by organisms that live in the water, like Acanthamoeba. Acanthamoeba is a type of amoeba that can get into soft lenses and then burrow into the cornea. It can cause severe scarring and often results in the need for a corneal transplant. In addition, wearing lenses beyond the manufacturer's recommended schedule increases the risk for corneal problems and eyelid problems like giant papillary conjunctivitis (GPC). GPC is a potentially severe condition that can cause itching, discharge, redness, and scarring. To reduce the risk for eye health problems, the American Optometric Association and the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommend following your doctor's recommendations for lens care and having your contact lens fit re-evaluated annually.

Contact Lens Options for Eyes Over 40

If you are over 40 years of age and wear contact lenses, you may be experiencing difficulty with seeing near objects with your contact lenses on. This is known as *Presbyopia*. While some contact lens wearers can successfully wear monovision contact lenses (one eye corrected for distance and one for near), this reduces depth perception and can cause an unbalanced feeling. An increasingly more popular option is multifocal contacts. Multifocal lenses provide both distance and near vision. While they are available in soft lenses, the rigid lens designs usually provide more consistently clear vision. The newest multifocal lenses available are known as *Wave* Multifocals. Patients wearing *Wave* multifocals report good distance and near vision and comfort similar to soft lenses. In some cases, *Wave* lenses can be worn continuously (both night and day) for up to 7 days. If you prefer soft lenses, There are a number of new disposable multifocal lenses available. If you would like more information about multifocal contact lenses please ask our staff.

Not ready for LASIK? Ask about Corneal Reshaping Lenses!

Corneal Reshaping, also known as orthokeratology, is a non-surgical process that temporarilly reshapes the cornea using a special contact lens for overnight wear. Most individuals can enjoy good vision wihout having to wear glasses for 1-2 days.