

Informed consent for contact lens fittings during COVID-19

In light of the current pandemic involving the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, infections can occur via the mucous membranes, such as the respiratory system and the ocular surface. The virus has been isolated from the tears of infected people. There are other infections which can exist on the ocular surface as well.

You may prefer to wear glasses instead of contact lenses because contact lens wearers tend to touch their eyes much more often and glasses may even provide a “mechanical barrier” to keep hands away. A study has recently been published showing that daily glasses wearers may be less susceptible to COVID-19 infection¹. If you do wear contact lenses, it remains essential that you use appropriate hygiene when handling your contacts or touching your eyes. When inserting or removing contact lenses, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20-30 seconds and dry them before touching your face or applying the lenses. If your child is planning to go to school or away from home with their new lenses consider whether they will have easy access to proper hand washing stations. New contact lens wearers may experience some irritation in the first few weeks as they get used to wearing lenses and are more prone to touching and rubbing their eyes than experienced wearers. We recommend that you not send your child to school or camp with their new lenses until they are comfortable with washing and handling the lenses themselves.

The staff of VPEC is currently taking personal care precautions such as wearing masks, goggles, and gloves during examinations and fittings. These public safety precautions do present challenges for us with inserting and removing their contact lenses. Many times we are able to talk a child through the process until they are comfortable inserting and removing the lenses themselves. Historically, we have been able to put the lenses in for them the very first time so they can get used to it, and help them take the lenses out if they are unable. This is made exceedingly more difficult while wearing gloves. The staff will also need to be in very close proximity to your child so we will require the child to wear their mask properly the entire time. If this is not possible, or too uncomfortable, we can schedule the fitting for a later date when everyone is more comfortable. We thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

By signing below, I am confirming that I have read and understand the above contact lens fitting information during COVID and am requesting a contact lens fitting today.

Patient Name

Parent/Guardian/Legal Representative

Date

1. Weibiao Z. et al. (Sep 2020). Association of Daily Wear of Eyeglasses With Susceptibility to Coronavirus Disease 2019 Infection *JAMA Ophthalmol*. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamaophthalmology/fullarticle/2770872>