

BAINBRIDGE EYE CARE ASSOCIATES NOTICE OF CONTACT LENS POLICIES

effective 1/1/2009

We would be very pleased to have you as a contact lens patient, but it is important to inform you of our policies surrounding contact lenses. In all cases, our primary concern is the health of your eyes.

1. Before you can be fit with contact lenses, you need a comprehensive eye exam within the prior six months. A glasses prescription from another office will suffice if it is from the prior six months.
2. In addition, you will need a contact lens fitting or exam. The contact lens fitting consists of:
 - ❖ Evaluation of your needs and objectives from contacts (intended wear schedule, activities, etc.)
 - ❖ Measurement of the eye to determine which lenses are indicated.
 - ❖ Trying on one or more styles as needed to achieve best vision and comfort.
 - ❖ Training on insertion and removal, care, cleaning, and storage of lenses.
 - ❖ Follow-up visit, usually in 1-3 weeks, for purposes indicated below. *(You must always arrive for lens checks WITH LENSES IN, having worn for a minimum of 2 hours.)*
 - ❖ Prescribing lenses if there are no observable or anticipated problems from lens wear.

Professional care does not end with the dispensing of your final lenses. Ongoing success requires ongoing care. Contact lenses are considered by the FDA as a medical device, and as such can only be fit by licensed health care providers. Our primary concern is the health of your eyes.

Follow-up

We will instruct you on how to insert and remove your contacts and how to care for them properly. We need you to commit to return to our office to let us evaluate how the trial lenses are working and affecting your ocular surface, usually in 1-3 weeks. At that time, we will evaluate the health impact of the lenses on your eyes, discuss your overall satisfaction with the lenses, and recheck your lenses to see if you need a power adjustment, or if we need to try a different style of lens. If that is required, you will need to try the new lenses for an additional period and return for an evaluation. If you fail to return for that progress evaluation in the allotted time, no more diagnostic lenses will be made available, and no prescription for contacts can be given. If you arrive with no lenses in your eyes, we cannot evaluate their impact and you will need to reschedule the visit. Once the fit of your lenses has been finalized, we would be happy to provide you a copy of your contact lens prescription. Contact lens prescriptions will not be provided if the fit and follow-up have not been completed.

Replacement Schedule

On frequent replacement, or “disposable” contact lenses, the lenses we prescribe have been approved by the FDA, for wear for a certain length of time, and then should be thrown away. Some people will try to “stretch” this time to save money on lens costs. This is one of the most frequent causes of significant complications from contact lenses. These complications can range from blurred vision, to painful eye infections, to permanent vision damage. We cannot emphasize enough that patients consider the relatively minute cost of lenses versus the cost of permanent eye damage. Very rarely we will prescribe a lens to be replaced on a schedule that is different than the FDA approval. Such a prescription can only result from a fitting specifically for the intended wear schedule.

Contact Lens Solutions

Contact lens solutions are not all the same, especially generic or store brand formulations. Solution issues are a major source of contact lens comfort and corneal and conjunctival health problems. We always prescribe the solutions that we expect will be the best for our patients and their particular lenses and this is one of many things considered in your follow-up. Many patients, without knowing any better, switch to a different brand at the pharmacy afterward. Please let us know if you would like to switch to a different type of solution from what we prescribed so that we can steer you in the proper direction depending on your issue.

Contact Lens Success

Occasionally, some patients may have ongoing difficulty in handling their lenses, may have comfort or lens dryness problems, or will simply decide that contacts are too much trouble, and decide to only wear glasses. With these factors in mind, we cannot offer any warranty as to whether or not you will be a “successful” contact lens wearer, as there are too many factors (such as lens care or replacement) that are out of our control. No refunds will be given on any of our professional exam or fitting fees.

Damaged or Defective Lenses

Occasionally lenses may be defective and damaged when you open them. For us to be able to return them for credit to the manufacturer, we may require you return the damaged/defective lenses, including the boxes for purposes of lot number identification.

Diagnostic Lenses

While diagnostic or “trial” lenses are provided to patients at no charge as part of a lens fitting, they are not given to us in endless free supplies by the manufacturers. We are provided the trials based on purchases of lens supplies by patients, and we usually have to pay shipping charges for the trials. This reality dictates that we must apply some judgment regarding the supply of trial lenses to patients.

On soft contact lenses we normally dispense diagnostic lenses at no charge to see how the lenses will work on a day-to-day basis. At our discretion, we may apply a handling and/or shipping charge when providing trial lenses in any other case. See the section below regarding supplies of replacement lenses.

Lens Replacement

We respect your choice as a consumer and we pledge to never hinder your choice of lens replacement source in any way. We reply to prescription verification requests in a timely manner and avoid “private label” brands unless they are actually the best lens for you.

In considering your source for lens replacement, we would like you to be aware of our own competitively-priced replacement service. Ask about our convenient replacement options and compare our pricing for popular brands. You will find that our lenses are priced very competitively.

If you order your contacts through our office, you will receive the following additional benefits:

- ❖ Free trial lenses at times when you may have run out and are waiting to be seen for a follow-up or exam. We reserve the right to limit quantities if deemed necessary.
- ❖ We complete your rebate paperwork – one less thing you have to do to get your money back.
- ❖ Free exchange of any unopened boxes of contacts in the event your prescription changes. A nominal shipping charge may apply. Boxes that you have written on or otherwise defaced cannot be exchanged. (For this reason we label left and right lenses with removable stickers before dispensing them.)
- ❖ One additional follow-up/troubleshooting check (after Rx finalization) is provided at half price.
- ❖ Replacement lenses for any defective lenses (you must save the defective lenses for us to return them to the manufacturer for inspection)
- ❖ 20% off the lesser of either backup eyeglasses or an annual supply (as prescribed) of contact lenses when both are ordered at the same time.
- ❖ Guaranteed parameter accuracy since the information comes directly out of your medical record.

If you choose to order your contacts through another source, you must be aware of our policy:

- ❖ We cannot give reimbursement, credit or exchange for any lenses purchased elsewhere, including defective lenses or unused lenses, such as in the case of a needed power or parameter adjustment.
- ❖ No additional trial lenses will be supplied to you (other than those allotted for in the initial fitting), unless you pay a special handling fee.
- ❖ All visits for any follow up care will be charged at the usual and customary office charge.