

# Contact Lens Update

CLINICAL INSIGHTS BASED IN CURRENT RESEARCH

## Can kids wear contact lenses?

Research has shown that children as young as eight can successfully handle, care for and wear contact lenses. Is your child ready to try them? Consider the following information before making a decision.

### Consider contact lenses for active kids

Spectacles are cumbersome. They don't fit under hockey helmets and can fall off or slide down the nose with vigorous activity. Spectacle frames obstruct the field of view and cold weather can fog lenses up. Spectacles also break, which can be dangerous, and costly to replace!

### Contact lenses can boost confidence

Contact lenses can improve how kids feel about their appearance and sports abilities as well as their interactions with peers.<sup>1</sup>

### Vision with contact lenses

Contact lenses provide more natural vision than spectacle lenses, which can make objects look distorted. Spectacle lenses for the correction of myopia can also make objects appear smaller than they really are.

### Contact lenses are cost-effective

After taking into account the cost of lenses and frames, and replacing spectacles due to damage or loss, contact lenses may actually be a less expensive option.



### Kids can learn to care for contact lenses

Research at the Centre for Contact Lens Research<sup>2</sup> found that children aged 8-16 years with no previous experience wearing contact lenses were easily fit with and able to care for contact lenses. Learning how to handle the lenses required only a 30-minute training session.

### Is your child ready to try contact lenses?

Parents are in the best position to know whether a child is responsible enough for contact lenses. Do they keep their room tidy? Do they need reminding to brush their hair and teeth? Can you trust them to know when to remove a contact lens if it is causing discomfort?

### The bottom line

Serious ocular complications from contact lens wear are rare, and are no more common in children than in adults.<sup>3</sup> While contact lenses might not work for every child, a motivated child can be just as successful with contact lenses as an adult.



<sup>1</sup> Chalmers RL, et al.. Age and other risk factors for corneal infiltrative and inflammatory events in young soft contact lens wearers from the Contact Lens Assessment in Youth (CLAY) study. *Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science* 2011;52(9):6690-6696.

<sup>2</sup> Walline J, et al. Benefits of contact lens wear for children and teens. *Eye & Contact Lens: Science & Clinical Practice* 2007; 33 (6): 317-321.

<sup>3</sup> Paquette L, et al. Ease of contact lens fitting and training in a child and youth population. *Optometry and Vision Science* 2011;88:E-abstract 115833.



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**Who are we?** Contact Lens Update is produced by the Centre for Contact Lens Research at the School of Optometry and Vision Science, University of Waterloo, Canada. Visit us regularly at [ContactLensUpdate.com](http://ContactLensUpdate.com) for insights into current research and updated patient and practitioner resources.

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