

Contact Lenses and the Law

Contact lenses are designated as 'Medical Devices' and as such necessitate a legal standard of clinical care.

Regardless of this fact some years ago the sale of contact lenses was deregulated, allowing people to shop around to compare prices and to have freedom of choice. Unfortunately this carried a rather serious side effect. It became apparent people who bought on the internet were either unaware or did not consider the medical and health implications. Hospitals noted a huge rise in the number of people presenting with severe eye infections. Indeed one of the biggest risk factors for serious eye infections is buying contact lenses online! The lenses are the same, however it seems a lot of online buyers are less likely to wear or clean the lenses properly, and are therefore more prone to eye problems.

It was soon realised while the sale of the commodity could be down regulated, the laws on health checks had to be up-regulated to ensure everyone receive at least a minimum of care.

Initial Trial and NEW Contact Lens Wearers

If you have never worn contact lenses before, or wish to try a different sort of lens, then you must have an up to date spectacle prescription. This is to ensure general ocular health but also gives the practitioner a starting point as to what power lenses you may need.

Usually a routine eye exam would be recommended every two years. It may be shorter if the optometrist is monitoring a health issue such as glaucoma or cataracts. Whatever the eye examining practitioner recommended is what the contact lens practitioner must adhere to.

Once you are an ongoing contact lens wearer this rule only applies if you need to change lens type or power - for example, if you need multifocal lenses as you get a little older.

Ongoing Clinical Care - Aftercares

Once you are an experienced contact lens wearer you still need a minimum of contact lens checks. If you buy lenses separately these professional services will carry additional charges. See our 'Price Policy' leaflet for more detail. The very minimum check up schedule is once a year. However, if the contact lens practitioner recommends more regular checks, say every three months to monitor an eye condition, then the schedule needs to be adhered to. As inconvenient as this sounds, technically lenses should not be given out if you go over the time limit. Obviously we will do everything feasible, without jeopardising your health, to minimise any potential inconvenience.

Daily Disposable Lenses

Irregular daily contact lens wearers are inclined to get caught by this law. Even if you only wear them one day a month technically you will have to have at least one aftercare a year. If you buy the lenses only, without the aftercare service then these checks will carry private charges.

Our Legal Obligations To You

We will always strive to ensure you are up to date with your checks. If, for some unforeseen reason, your checks lapse we will always flex to help you. We may give you extra lenses to keep you going until we can book you in for the appointment.

If anything untoward happens which interrupts your normal schedule then please let us know. For instance if you are going on holiday then we can bring your check forward, especially if you are going away for some time. Imagine losing your lenses and not being able to purchase more!

REMEMBER: If you are buying 'lenses only' either from ourselves or other suppliers then all check-ups carry private charges. This is why we would always recommend the full clinical service (see our 'Price Policy' leaflet).