

Health Alert

What Every Contact Lens Wearer Should Know

(NAPSA)—When many children, teenagers and even adults think about “who” or “what” they want to be for Halloween, a number of them are tempted to complete their look with decorative contact lenses bought without a prescription.

Halloween, however, isn't the only time of year when people try contact lenses without a prescription. According to the American Optometric Association's 2013 American Eye-Q® consumer survey, 17 percent of Americans have worn decorative contact lenses that don't provide vision correction as part of a costume or for other cosmetic purposes. Of those individuals, 24 percent purchased them without a prescription from a source other than an eye doctor.

“A contact lens is a medical device and in the United States, all contact lenses, even purely cosmetic ones that do not provide vision correction, require a prescription,” explains Dr. Deanna Pena Garcia, an optometrist with Houston Eye Associates. “By buying and wearing contact lenses without medical guidance from your eye care professional and a valid prescription, you may put yourself at risk for serious, even blinding eye infections.”

“When wearing contact lenses, it is essential that you learn and practice good hygiene, and follow your eye care provider's instructions for wearing and replacement schedules, lens care, and disinfecting routines,” advises Dr. Pena Garcia. She recommends following these dos and don'ts for handling, wearing and caring for contact lenses:

DO:

- Wash and rinse your hands thoroughly with a mild soap and dry with a lint-free towel before handling your lenses.

- Put in your contacts before you put on your makeup or any costume paint.



Experts say a contact lens is a medical device and as such it requires a prescription, even if it's worn for cosmetic purposes.

- Remove lenses immediately if you experience eye discomfort, excessive tearing, vision changes, and redness of the eye or other problems and promptly contact your eye care professional.

- Always remove, clean and disinfect your lenses according to the schedule recommended by your eye doctor.

DON'T:

- Wear another person's lenses.
- Wear lenses longer than the time frame recommended by your eye doctor.

- Rinse your lenses in water from the tap or expose them to any water—such as swimming or showering—while wearing them.

- Use anything aside from recommended solution, such as saliva, to lubricate your lenses.

Talk to your eye doctor about any questions or concerns you have about proper wear and care of your contact lenses. For more tips and information, read “Healthy Vision & Contact Lenses” from Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. at www.acuvue.com/HealthyVisionCL.

Dr. Deanna Pena Garcia is a paid consultant for Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.