



ABOUT RIGID GAS PERMEABLE (RGP) CONTACT LENSES

Q What are RGP contact lenses?

A RGP contact lenses are rigid, but they should not be confused with old-style "hard" contact lenses, which are now obsolete.

RGP lenses are smaller than soft lenses, fitting within the cornea rather than overlapping onto the white of the eye. This allows the tears to flow freely under the lens and this combined with the oxygen permeability of the lens material means that RGP lenses are a healthy option for your eyes.

Because RGP lenses are rigid, they correct for any imperfections in the shape of the cornea such as astigmatism and in many cases give a superior standard of vision to soft lenses. They also last for many months and are rather more robust than soft lenses.

Q Why doesn't everybody wear RGP lenses?

A The main reason is that they usually require an adaptation period of several days before they become comfortable whereas soft lenses are comfortable within a few minutes. However, if you are prepared to adapt, you will be rewarded with excellent vision, robust lenses and reduced costs. RGP lenses are also less suitable for sports and other activities as the lens can become dislodged rather more easily.

Most types of eye problems (refractive errors) can be corrected with RGP contact lenses including short-sightedness, long-sightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia (problems focusing close up which happens to most people after the age of approximately 40).

Q I don't like the idea of something in my eye?

A This is quite a common and healthy reaction! Despite the fact that so many people wear contact lenses and do not experience any problems with them, many non-wearers are nervous about the thought of putting something into their eyes.

The first step in overcoming this fear is by asking your optometrist for help. He or she will measure your eyes and recommend which contact lenses would offer the best fit and comfort.

Once you have chosen which type of contact lenses you want, your optometrist will help you get used to inserting them. Although it can take a while to get used to, even the most sensitive people find that they can insert their soft contact lenses easily after a while.

Inserting RGP lenses

- Always wash your hands (preferably with simple soap) before inserting your soft contact lenses.
- Dry your hands thoroughly with a fluff-free towel as soft lenses will tend to stick to wet fingers.
- Position yourself in front of a mirror.
- Remove the lens from the contact lens case.
- Hold your top eyelid with the middle finger of your left hand



to stop yourself from blinking and pull down your bottom eyelid with the middle finger of your right hand (assuming you are right handed . see diagram).

- Look straight ahead into the mirror and place the lens in the middle of your cornea (the clear part of the eye).
- Let go of the bottom eyelid and look down so that you can make sure the lens is in the correct position.

Removing RGP lenses

- Always wash your hands before removing your soft contact lenses.
- Dry your hands with a clean fluff-free towel.
- Look into a mirror.

Blink method

- Place your index finger at the outer junction of your upper and lower lids. Stretch the skin outward and slightly upward while keeping your eye open wide (don't allow your lid to slide over your lens).
- Put your other hand underneath the eye and blink. The lens will be pinched by the pressure of your eyelids and will pop out onto your hand.



Two-finger method

- Place the tip of your index finger of one hand on the middle of the edge of the upper eyelid and the index finger of the other hand on the

middle of the edge of the lower lid.

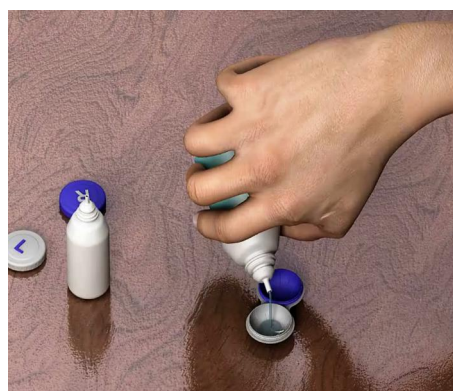
- Press the lids inward and then together. The lens should be wedged out of your eye and will fall onto your hand.
- The lens may slide over onto the white part of your eye. If this occurs, blink to re-centre the lens before trying to remove it again.

Q How do I Look after my RGP contact lenses

A There are many contact lens care systems available and your optometrist will advise on the most appropriate products for your eyes. Always follow the instructions that come with these products carefully.

In general, you should:

- Place the lens in the palm of your hand, put a drop of the **cleaning** solution on the lens and gently rub it with the end of a finger.
- Thoroughly rinse the lens with the **soaking solution** or **saline**.
- Fill your contact lens case up with fresh **soaking solution** and put the lens in the case. This will be ready to insert directly into your eye next time you wish to wear the lenses.



Remember to use fresh solution every day and to replace your contact lens case on a regular basis. It is also very important to attend your optometrist for regular contact lens after care.