Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# How to Clean Your Contact Lenses

This information explains how to clean your contact lenses.

## When to clean your contact lenses

How often you need to clean your contact lenses depends on the type of lens you have. Your healthcare provider will tell you how often to clean your lenses. They'll also write it below to help you remember.

**Clean your contact lenses every _____.**

## How to clean your contact lenses

The steps for cleaning your contact lenses depends on the type of contact lens solution you're using. **Never use tap water to clean your contact lenses or contact lens case.** Using tap water may increase your risk of getting an infection.

Your healthcare provider will tell you which type of contact lens solution to use. They'll also check the box next to that type to help you remember.

## ☐ Multipurpose contact lens solution

Opti-Free®, Biotrue®, and renu® are examples of multipurpose contact lens solutions.

To use a multipurpose contact lens solution:

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap. Rub your hands together well for at least 20 seconds, then rinse. Dry your hands with a paper towel and use that same towel to turn off the faucet.
2. Fill each side of your clean, dry lens case (see Figure 1) with fresh multipurpose solution.
3. Take the contact lens out of one of your eyes. Hold it on your finger or in the palm of your hand.
4. Squirt some multipurpose contact lens solution onto the lens. Gently rub the lens between your fingers or between your palm and finger.
5. Place the lens inside your lens case. If it's from your right eye, put it in the "R" side. If it's from your left eye, put it in the "L" side. Close the lid.
6. Repeat steps 3 to 5 with your other lens.



Figure 1. Contact lens case for multipurpose contact solution

### ☐ Hydrogen peroxide contact lens solution

Clear Care® is an example of a hydrogen peroxide contact lens solution. Hydrogen peroxide solutions come with a special lens case (see Figure 2).

The case has 4 main parts:

- A container to hold the solution.
- A lid to close the container.
- Lens holders (baskets) to hold your contact lenses.
- A platinum disc to change the hydrogen peroxide into water and oxygen. This makes it safe to put your lenses back in your eyes.

Once you put hydrogen peroxide solution on your lenses, you cannot put them back in your eyes right away. It's helpful to have your eyeglasses or a second set of contact lenses nearby before you start.

To use a hydrogen peroxide contact lens solution:

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap. Rub your hands together well for at least 20 seconds, then rinse. Dry your hands with a paper towel and use that same towel to turn off the faucet.
2. Take your contact lenses out of your eyes. Put the lens from your right eye in the basket labeled "R." Put the lens from your left eye in the basket labeled "L." Make sure to snap the baskets closed.

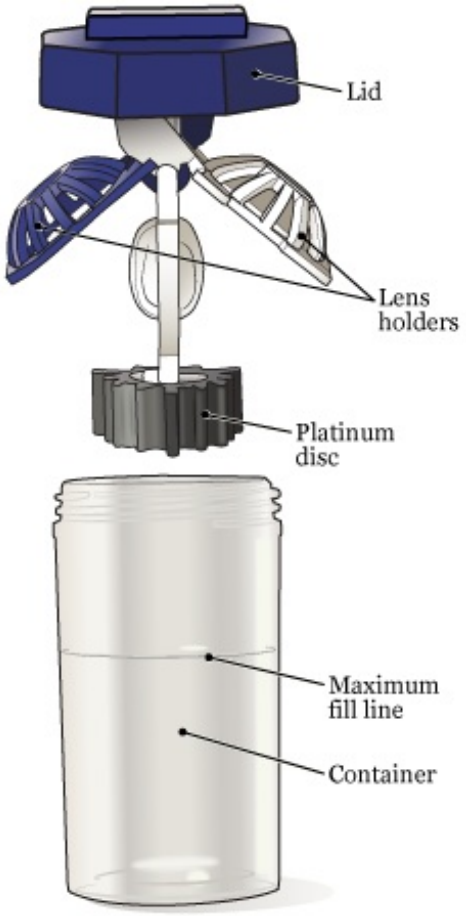



Figure 2. Contact lens case for hydrogen peroxide contact solution

3. Hold the baskets over the sink. Rinse your lenses with the hydrogen peroxide solution for 5 seconds.
4. Fill the container up to the line with fresh hydrogen peroxide solution. Put the baskets into the solution and screw the lid closed. Do not shake the container.
5. Let your contact lenses soak in the solution for at least 6 hours before putting them back in your eyes. Putting them in sooner could make your eyes burn and sting.



**Never put hydrogen peroxide contact lens solution in your eye.**

If you get hydrogen peroxide solution in your eye, rinse your eye with sterile saline solution for 2 minutes. You can buy it at your local pharmacy without a prescription. If you do not have sterile saline solution, rinse your eye with tap water instead.

Call your healthcare provider right away if you still have pain or vision changes after rinsing your eye.

## More tips for caring for your contact lenses

- Always wash your hands before putting your contact lenses in or taking them out.
- When you take your contact lenses out of your lens case, dump out the used contact lens solution. Store your lens case in a clean, dry place with the lid(s) off.
- Replace your contact lens case every 3 months.
- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions for replacing your contact lenses.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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