

CAN CHILDREN 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 can be inconvenient: They obstruct the field of view and fog up in cold weather. They can fall off or slide down the nose with vigorous activity, and they don't fit under sports helmets. They also break, which can be dangerous and costly.

Contact lenses can boost confidence

Contact lenses can improve how children feel about their appearance and sports abilities as well as their interactions with peers. (1)

Contact lenses are cost-effective

Spectacle lenses and frames can be costly, particularly if they need replacing due to damage or loss. Depending on your child's prescription and habits, contact lenses may be a less expensive option.

Kids can learn to care for contact lenses

Children as young as 8 can be easily fitted with contact lenses and are capable of caring for them properly. Learning how to handle the lenses can take as little as 30 minutes of training. (2)



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 lenses are rare and no more common in children than in adults. (3) While contact lenses might not work for every child, a motivated child can be just as successful with contact lenses as an adult.

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

2 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.

3 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.