



Many of our patients routinely wear contact lenses as their primary source of vision correction, and many of our new patients are seeking services that will allow them to be successful contact lens wearers. Contact lenses are medical devices fitted by professional eye care practitioners; contact lens use is not without risk. With modern materials and proper education regarding contact lens use, risks associated with contact lens wear have been greatly decreased. Please read the following commonly asked questions and answers to gain a better understanding of our contact lens fitting philosophy and policies.

**Q. Do routine eye examinations include a contact lens fitting/prescription?**

A. No. A routine eye examination provides the patient with a glasses prescription. A separate contact lens fitting is required to determine the contact lens prescription.

**Q. What is different about a contact lens fitting, compared to a routine eye exam?**

A. While some of the information gathered at the time of the routine eye examination is used to determine a diagnostic contact lens, the final prescription is not determined until additional information is obtained at the contact lens evaluation. The Doctor needs to evaluate the comfort, fitting characteristics, and vision obtained with that particular contact lens.

**Q. What is involved in a contact lens fitting?**

A. Based on several factors, the Doctor will determine a diagnostic contact lens to dispense to the patient for a trial period. A trial period with the new contact lens will help the patient to decide if he/she likes the comfort and wearing schedule of the contact lens. At a follow-up appointment, the Doctor will check the vision to determine if the power can be changed to improve the quality or clarity of vision. The Doctor will also determine if the fit of the contact lens is appropriate with regard to the health of the eyes. If the fit, vision, and comfort of the lens is acceptable, a final prescription is then determined.

**Q. What is covered in the contact lens fitting fee?**

A. Training on the proper care of lenses (for new patients), diagnostic contact lens trials (if necessary), sample of contact lens solution (if needed), evaluation by the Doctor or NCLE Board Certified staff member of the fit and vision provided by the contact lens at a follow-up appointment. Multiple visits to the office to achieve a more complex fit are covered, as well as subsequent eye health monitoring.

**Q. How much do the contact lens fittings cost?**

A. The fees are determined by the complexity of the fit and also whether the patient has previously worn contact lenses. A more complex fitting requires more time with the Doctor, as well as potentially more follow-up appointments to determine the appropriate prescription.

**Q. How long is a contact lens prescription valid?**

A. One year (Tennessee State Law), unless determined by the Doctor that the patient needs to return sooner, based on any eye health concerns.

**Q. Why does a fitting cost more for first-time contact lens wearers?**

A. Patients wearing contact lenses for the first time require a little extra time with the Doctor and/or our staff, with regard to teaching the patient insertion and removal techniques for the contact lenses, as well as care of the contact lenses. This is not necessary with previous wearers.

**Q. What are some of the risks associated with contact lenses?**

A. One of the major risks associated with contact lens use are eye infections. Often, complications associated with contact lens use can be avoided with proper handling as well as an acceptable wear schedule. Because contact lenses are a medical device, proper care and use of the lenses is imperative for maintaining eye health. Please talk to your Doctor if you have any questions about appropriate contact lens use and care or review our Contact Lens Care and Handling form.

**Q. This is my first visit to your office; I've been wearing the same contacts for years, and have never had any problems. I just need a contact lens prescription. Will this require an additional fee?**

A. Yes. There still needs to be an evaluation of the contact lenses themselves with regard to the fit and vision provided with the current contact lenses. A contact lens prescription cannot be given without evaluation. After this evaluation, if the Doctor determines no changes need to be made, a contact lens prescription may be released to the patient. If the Doctor determines the fit or vision to be unacceptable, a new lens may be required to provide a better or healthier fit.

**Q. Will my insurance cover my contact lens fitting?**

A. This depends on your specific insurance plan. Many plans will cover towards glasses OR contact lenses, not both. One of our staff members will be happy to inquire with your insurance company about your eligibility.

**Q. How long does a contact lens fitting take? How long is a contact lens follow up appointment?**

A. If the contact lens fitting is performed on a day separate from the routine eye examination, typically about 15-20 minutes. This is for the Doctor or NCLE Board Certified staff member to review information in the chart, determine a suitable diagnostic contact lens, and do a preliminary evaluation of the fit and vision obtained with that particular lens. Contact lens follow-up appointments typically last about 10 minutes, unless a change in the fit or power needs to be made.