

SPORTS & LEISURE

with Contact Lenses

A Practical Guide to Using Contact Lenses During Sports and Recreational Activities

Educational Leaflet About Contact Lenses



Reviewed by



الجمعية السعودية للبصريات
Saudi Society Of Optometry

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Vision Correction and Sport

Whether you are an Olympic athlete at the top of your game or simply enjoy an occasional run, contact lenses can provide clear vision and freedom of movement without spectacle frames getting in the way.

When participating in any sport, whether competitively or for recreation, clear vision is important for achieving the best possible result.

Do not dismiss a visual problem, even if it seems minor. Uncorrected vision can affect performance. Appropriate vision correction and regular eye examinations are important.



Sports and Visual Acuity



When playing sports, vision should be clear in all directions of gaze, for example when following a moving object, judging its position on the field, and coordinating your response.

A regular eye examination does more than determine whether your vision needs correction. It also assesses eye health and can help identify signs of other health conditions.

It may reveal signs associated with conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

During the examination, your optometrist will also assess how well your eyes work together and whether their visual function can be improved.

Contact Lenses During Sport

- Contact lenses may provide a wider, less restricted field of peripheral vision compared with eyeglass frames.
- They do not fog or mist like spectacle lenses.
- They can provide sharp, stable vision and can be worn under face masks, protective goggles, or helmets.
- There are no spectacle frames to slip, fall, or move during activity or with perspiration.
- They can reduce the image-size or shape changes that may occur with some spectacle corrections.
- With vision corrected, you can concentrate on the activity.

Sports in Which Contact Lenses May Be Particularly Useful

From occasional running to more demanding sports, contact lenses can help avoid practical problems associated with spectacle frames during activity.

Contact Lenses for Different Activities

Running and Exercise: While running, jogging, or working out at the gym, glasses may slip, fog up, or move. Contact lenses may help avoid these frame-related problems.

Football and Rugby: In sports involving physical contact, glasses may fall off, fog up, or become dirty and obstruct vision. Contact lenses avoid these frame-related problems.

Cycling and Mountain Biking: Contact lenses can be worn with a helmet and sunglasses without interference from prescription spectacle frames.

Tennis, Squash, and Badminton: Contact lenses provide an unobstructed field of view, which may help when tracking the ball.

Climbing and Horse Riding: Contact lenses avoid the need to adjust glasses during activity.

Snow Sports: Contact lenses can be worn under non-prescription protective goggles or with wraparound sunglasses. Some contact lenses contain a filter that blocks part of the ultraviolet radiation.



Protecting Your Eyes from Harmful Ultraviolet Rays

Prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation can damage the eyes, just as it can damage the skin.

For athletes who participate in outdoor sports, the effects of UV exposure may be cumulative and can cause irreversible damage to the structures of the eye and the surrounding tissues if the eyes are left unprotected.

Whether you play tennis or beach volleyball in summer, or ski or snowboard in winter, your eyes are exposed to sunlight. Although sunglasses help reduce UV exposure, traditional loose-fitting frames may allow rays to reach the eyes from the sides, above, and below.

A higher level of UV protection can be achieved by wearing close-fitting, UV-absorbing sunglasses or protective eyewear, a wide-brimmed hat, and UV-blocking contact lenses when prescribed.

Daily Disposable Lenses

Daily disposable lenses, which are replaced after one day of wear, may suit people who usually wear glasses and would like to wear contact lenses during physical activity.

They are a practical vision correction option because they require no cleaning or storage. A fresh pair is used each day and discarded after wear.

Ask your optometrist whether daily disposable lenses are suitable for your visual needs and lifestyle.



Astigmatism

Astigmatism is a refractive error that occurs when the curvature of the cornea or lens is uneven. As a result, light is focused irregularly on the retina, causing blurred vision at both near and far distances.

If you have astigmatism, toric contact lenses may be recommended to correct your vision.

Some toric lens designs interact with the eyelids to help keep the lens in the correct orientation during eye and head movements, supporting clear, stable vision.

Toric lenses are available as reusable and daily disposable options and in a range of contact lens materials.



Even corneal curvature
in all directions like a
soccer ball

Result: Clear vision ✓



Uneven corneal curvature
more like a rugby ball

Result: Blurred or
distorted vision ✗

Presbyopia

Presbyopia is a natural age-related change in which the eye's lens gradually loses its flexibility, making it more difficult to focus on nearby objects.

If you have presbyopia, ask your optometrist about multifocal contact lenses.

In the past, correcting presbyopia often required wearing reading glasses over contact lenses prescribed for distance vision. Some people may also have stopped wearing contact lenses as their presbyopia progressed.

Multifocal contact lenses use a gradual progression of lens powers to support vision at far, intermediate, and near distances.



Important Safety Information

Some contact lenses contain a UV-blocking filter that helps reduce the transmission of harmful UV radiation to the cornea and inside the eye.

UV-absorbing contact lenses are not a substitute for UV-absorbing goggles or sunglasses because they do not completely cover the eye and surrounding area.

Continue to use UV-absorbing eyewear as advised by your optometrist.

Contact lenses are used for vision correction. An optometrist will determine whether they are suitable for you.

Although rare, serious eye problems can develop while wearing contact lenses.

Follow the prescribed wearing and replacement schedule, and adhere to the proper lens care instructions.

Contact Lens Precautions



Do not wear contact lenses if you have an eye infection, another eye problem, or an allergy to any lens ingredient.

If you experience eye discomfort or another eye problem, remove the lenses and contact your optometrist immediately.

For guidance on proper wear, care, and safety, consult your optometrist and follow the Instructions for Use supplied with your prescribed lenses.

Contact Lens Correction Options

Contact lenses are available to correct short-sightedness, long-sightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia, including multifocal designs.



Clear vision supports everyday life

This educational leaflet was developed for the Saudi Society of Optometry with the support of ACUVUE®.



Find out more at
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sso.org.sa



info@sso.org.sa



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