

## COVID-19 and Contact Lens Wear

This is a joint statement from The American Optometric Association (AOA) and the American Academy of Optometry:

(As of 3/26 The American Academy of Ophthalmology has no contact lens related guidance).

**SUMMARY: According to the AOA and AAO contact lens wear is a safe and effective form of vision correction when cared for properly. Proper hand washing and contact lens disinfection along with avoidance of face, eye, nose and mouth touching will significantly reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission. Health providers should always use the proper eye PPE given their specific role in the healthcare chain and may want to consider wearing glasses if concerned about reflexive eye rubbing when performing duties not requiring goggles or face shields.**

## Contact lens wear during COVID-19

When it comes to contact lens wear, the American Optometric Association (AOA) wants to reinforce that contact lenses are a safe and effective form of vision correction for millions of people. The AOA provides the following advice to ensure proper wear and care for contact lenses.

**Exercise Proper Hand Washing.** When using contact lenses or spectacles, one should wash their hands carefully and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, followed by hand drying with unused paper towels. This should occur before every contact lens insertion and removal. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. People should avoid touching their face, including their eyes, nose and mouth, with unwashed hands.

**Disinfect Contact Lenses.** Contact lens wearers should either dispose of their daily disposable lenses each evening, or regularly disinfect their monthly and two-week lenses according to instructions from the manufacturer and one's doctor of optometry or eye care physician.

**Discontinue Lens Wear if Sick.** Consistent with recommendations for other types of illness, those who feel ill with cold or flu-like symptoms should cease contact lens wear.

**Glasses are Not Proven to Offer Protection.** There is no scientific evidence that wearing spectacles or glasses provides protection against COVID-19 or other viral transmissions. Healthy individuals can continue to wear and care for their contact lenses **as prescribed** by their doctor of optometry or eye care physician.