

Patient information

Contact Lenses Service

Can anyone get contact lenses at West Suffolk Hospital?

We provide contact lenses **only when there is a medical need**. Usually this is when vision cannot be improved with glasses but can be improved with contact lenses. The contact lens clinical staff will review your case and let you know whether contact lenses would be suitable. Examples of suitable cases include:

- Keratoconus
- some other disorders of the cornea
- high prescriptions (over +10.00DS/- 15.00DS)
- 'bandage' lenses.

Am I eligible?

Your referral from the ophthalmologist will be reviewed by the optometrist to ensure there is a clinical need for contact lenses. They will assess your eligibility and if you are eligible, an appointment will be sent to you.

What is the process for getting contact lenses?

If you have been reviewed and told in the contact lens clinic that lenses would be a suitable option for you, the lens type will then be selected according to your condition. The lenses are often complex and usually need to be specially made for you. It can take a few appointments to get the most accurate fitting.

On collection, the new lenses will be checked on the eye to see if it/they perform as expected. If no lens alterations are required, then the patient will be taught how to handle and look after the lenses. Once the optometrist and patient are happy that the lenses can be inserted and removed as required, then they can be taken home. Leaflets with detailed instructions are also provided. We will also require taking the payment on this appointment.

Follow-up and further aftercare

Once the lenses have been collected, a follow-up appointment will be arranged for a month or two later to determine whether the lens wear has been successful and to deal with any problems.

If the fitting is successful, further aftercare is provided generally every 6 months or annually depending on type of lens, eye condition, etc. If further adjustments are required, the optometrist will let you know about the next steps.

Lenses will need replacing. Your optometrist will let you know how frequent depending on type of lens.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact us to reschedule.

Patient who fail to attend 2 consecutive appointments or haven't been seen in 12 months, will not be supplied with contact lenses and will be discharged. **Please, make sure you attend your appointment for a contact lens aftercare.**

Contact lens charges

There is a charge for contact lenses supplied by hospital eye clinics. This charge is the same for any eye clinic across the country and is set by the Department of Health each year on 1st April. The current charges are as follows:

£61.77 per lens

£123.54 per pair

Current NHS charge for soft disposable/hybrid contact lenses

£61.77 for 6 months' supply (per eye) plus £4 postage where applicable.

Spare or replacement contact lenses

Spare lenses or replacements for lost or broken/damaged lenses will be charged as detailed above. There are no exemptions from charges for spare lenses or lenses which have been lost or broken/damaged.

Exemptions

Patients in the following categories are exempt from contact lens charges:

1. Afocal bandage or non-sighted prosthetic/occlusive lenses
2. Children under 16, or over 16 but under 19 in full time education
3. Patients requiring a clinical change in contact lens where a payment has been made within the last year
4. Patients who receive (or whose partner receives) one of the following benefits:
 - Income support
 - Universal credit

- Employment & support allowance (income based)
- Job seekers allowance (income based)
- Pension credit (but only those receiving the **guarantee credit** element)

5. Named on a valid HC2 certificate

6. Entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate

Valid proof of eligibility will be required at the time of ordering.

Important information:

- If lenses are to be posted, there is a £4 charge for all patients.
- Most lenses will take between 2 and 6 weeks to be ordered, manufactured, checked and posted.

What to do if you have a problem

If you have a problem whilst wearing a contact lens (e.g. blurry vision, discomfort or redness), first remove the lens to see if the problem resolves (it may be helpful to inspect the lens for any obvious damage). If it doesn't resolve, call the Optometry Department for advice within office hours on **01284 712924**.

Opening Times:

Monday	08:30 – 19:00
Tuesday	08:00 – 19:00
Wednesday	08:30 – 19:00
Thursday	Closed
Friday	08:30 – 16:30
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

What do I do in the case of an emergency?

If your eye suddenly becomes red, painful or your vision worsens, go to WSH A&E department.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo)

<https://www.accessable.co.uk>

