



<https://sites.google.com/site/lasikstlouisbrintonvision/wearing-contacts-for-too-long>

## 5 Surprising Dangers of Wearing Contacts For Too Long



Contact lenses offer a convenient and nearly invisible way to correct vision, making them a preferred choice for millions worldwide. However, wearing contacts comes with strict guidelines, especially regarding how long they should be worn each day. Pushing those limits might seem harmless, but the effects of wearing contacts for too long can be unexpectedly harmful. Here are five surprising dangers that can occur when contacts are over-worn, and why giving your eyes a break is essential.

One of the most common issues associated with wearing contacts for too long is corneal hypoxia, or oxygen deprivation. The cornea, unlike most tissues in the body, doesn't have blood vessels to supply it with oxygen; instead, it absorbs oxygen from the air. When contacts stay in the eye for extended periods, they create a barrier that limits the amount of oxygen reaching the cornea. This oxygen deficiency can lead to redness, discomfort, and, in severe cases, swelling. If left unchecked, corneal hypoxia can damage the cells in the cornea, potentially leading to long-term vision issues. A good sign that your eyes are oxygen-deprived is if you experience foggy or blurred vision while wearing your lenses for extended periods.

Another major risk of extended contact lens wear is increased susceptibility to eye infections. Contacts can trap bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms, creating an ideal environment for infections. One of the most concerning infections is microbial keratitis, which affects the cornea. This painful infection can cause redness, tearing, sensitivity to light, and blurred vision. Severe cases can lead to corneal scarring, permanent vision loss, and even blindness if left untreated. Eye care professionals warn that the risk of infection increases significantly for people who sleep in their contacts or wear them for consecutive days without cleaning.

A third danger, often overlooked, is the risk of corneal neovascularization. When the cornea is deprived of oxygen for too long, the body responds by growing new blood vessels in an attempt to bring more oxygen to the area. While this might sound like a helpful adaptation, it can actually obstruct vision. Blood vessels can cloud the normally clear cornea, causing discomfort and reducing visual clarity. In severe cases, neovascularization can prevent individuals from wearing contact lenses comfortably in the future and may even require medical intervention to prevent further damage. The best way to avoid this condition is to follow recommended wear schedules and give your eyes a break from contacts when possible.

Dry eyes are a frequent symptom of extended contact lens use, but many people are unaware that dryness can lead to corneal abrasions, or tiny scratches on the eye's surface. As contacts dry out, they can create friction against the delicate surface of the cornea. This friction can cause microscopic scratches, resulting in pain, redness, and sensitivity to light. More importantly, these abrasions act as entry points for bacteria, increasing the risk of infection. If you experience discomfort or a gritty sensation after wearing contacts for too long, it's best to remove them immediately, switch to glasses, and use lubricating drops to help the cornea recover.

Finally, a surprising and lesser-known risk of over-wearing contacts is Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis (GPC), an inflammatory condition that affects the inner eyelid. GPC is usually triggered by protein deposits that build up on contact lenses over time, especially when they aren't cleaned properly or are worn beyond their recommended timeframe. Symptoms of GPC include itching, redness, mucus discharge, and a feeling of something being stuck in the eye. In severe cases, GPC can make it uncomfortable, if not impossible, to wear contacts for extended periods. Reducing wear time and ensuring proper cleaning and replacement can help prevent this painful condition.

Wearing contacts beyond their intended wear time may seem like a small risk, but the potential dangers to your eye health are significant. Corneal hypoxia, infections, neovascularization, dry eye abrasions, and GPC can all result from over-wearing contacts and can lead to long-term complications if left unaddressed. To enjoy the benefits of contacts while keeping your eyes safe, always follow the wear schedule prescribed by your eye doctor, clean and store lenses as recommended, and switch to glasses periodically to give your eyes a break. Taking these precautions can help keep your eyes comfortable and healthy for years to come.

## Company Description

Each year thousands of patients come to Dr. Jason P. Brinton at Brinton Vision in St. Louis, seeking what we call visual freedom, or crisp, clear vision free of refractive errors, glasses, and contact lenses by treating myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism. We accomplish this through LASIK and its six variations – SMILE, Visian ICL, PRK, Raindrop inlay, Kamra inlay, and Custom Lens Replacement.

## Contact Details

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