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Requirements for Receiving Contact Lenses

Congratulations on your interest in contact lenses! Carmel Mountain Vision Care is a clinical study site for new contact lens technology. We have performed research for Alcon Laboratories, Allergan Pharmaceuticals, Ciba Vision, CooperVision, Menicon, Paragon Vision Sciences, Polymer Technologies, and SynergEyes. Because of our access to state-of-the-art technology and leadership in the contact lens industry, our patients benefit with clear, comfortable vision customized to individual needs.

- **Examination**

You need a recent comprehensive eye health examination (dated less than 6 months) where the internal and external ocular health and focusing of the eyes are evaluated. Most patients have good eye health for safe contact lens wear. Your doctor will determine if you need vision correction for myopia (nearsightedness), hyperopia (farsightedness), astigmatism, presbyopia, or anisometropia. The diagnosis is crucial for determining what type of contact lens is best for you. At this exam, you may receive a prescription for glasses. Your glasses prescription serves as a starting point for your doctor to prescribe contact lenses. Other services, including curvature measurements of the cornea (the front of the eye), are necessary for the doctor to prescribe contacts.

- **Contact Lens Fitting, Training, and Progress Visits**

If you are new to contact lenses, you will have a contact lens fitting, training, and progress visits. During the fitting, your doctor evaluates how diagnostic lenses position and move on your eye. You may be fit with disposable, planned replacement, conventional, daily wear or extended wear, spherical or toric, soft or rigid gas permeable (RGP), monovision or multifocal lenses. Many patients can get a first pair of diagnostic lenses to take home on the day of the initial exam. In more challenging prescriptions, the doctor may evaluate several different lenses on your eye before ordering custom lenses for optimal comfort and vision stability. After we dispense the initial lenses, you will receive a start-up solution kit and learn how to properly care for your lenses, including insertion, handling, removal, and cleaning techniques. Finally, you will have progress visits where your doctor ensures the contact lenses are performing optimally for everyday use. Please arrive to these visits wearing the contacts for at least for one hour so your doctor can assess your physiological response to contact lens wear. Your doctor may make minor changes to the lenses. Specialty contact lenses (e.g. multifocal, astigmatism, irregular cornea) typically require more progress visits. After completing the progress visits, you will receive your supply of contacts. Thereafter, an annual examination will keep your contact lens prescription current.

- **Contact Lens Professional and Material Fees**

The global fee for contact lens fitting, training, and progress visits ranges from \$174 for simple cases to several hundred dollars for complex cases (e.g. corneal transplantation, keratoconus, post-refractive surgery). This fee covers the time and expertise of your doctor and staff. It is generally a one-time cost to get you successful into a particular type of contact lens. The cost of lenses ranges from about a dollar to several hundred dollars each.

- **Why Aren't Glasses and Contact Lens Prescriptions the Same?**

Unlike eyeglasses, contact lenses are FDA Class II medical devices – even ones that only change eye color and don't change focus. Because contacts touch the eye, the numbers on the glasses and contact lens prescription may look very different due to optical mathematics. Contact lenses have parameters that glasses do not, including base curve, diameter, material, center thickness, intermediate and peripheral curves. Improperly prescribed lenses increase your risk of eye irritation and health problems including conjunctivitis, keratitis, and corneal abrasion. Before most contacts are prescribed, your doctor needs to examine you after wearing the contacts for an amount of time. It is the doctor's duty and our desire to prescribe contacts only after their fit is verified to be healthy.