

## Contact Lens and Contact Lens Cleaning Product Charges

There is a charge for each contact lens supplied under the Hospital Eye Service (HES) which is set by the Secretary of State for Health and reviewed annually. The current charge from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 is £57.00 per lens. Where a frequent change of contact lenses is clinically indicated, this charge will cover 6 months' supply. Therapeutic bandage lenses, occlusive and non-sighted prosthetic contact lenses are exempt from charges.

You may also be exempt from charges if you:

- are under 16 years of age, or up to 19 years of age and still in full-time education
- receive Income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contribution-based)
- receive Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- receive Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- are awarded Universal Credit
- are entitled to or named on a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- are named on a valid NHS Certificate for full help with health care costs (HC2)
- are named on an NHS certificate for partial help with health costs (HC3).

You will be asked to show proof of your entitlement in order to receive it. If none of the above apply to you, but you are on a low income you can also apply for help with costs using form HC(1) available from JobCentre Plus Offices, Dentists and Opticians.

Where the HES has prescribed contact lenses on grounds of clinical necessity, contact lens care products can also be supplied, however, each item is charged at a prescription charge (currently £8.60), therefore as the retail price is usually less than this, most patients will find it is more economical to purchase them elsewhere unless they are exempt from prescription charges or have a pre-payment certificate.

In addition to the exemption list above, you would be exempt from Charges for Contact Lens Care products if you are:

- 60 years of age or over
- pregnant or have had a baby in the previous 12 months and have a valid maternity exemption certificate (MatEx)
- an NHS Inpatient.

To be eligible for having NHS contact lenses through the HES, a contact lens must be clinically necessary and improve upon the quality of vision achieved with glasses.

This may include, but not exclusively be for, the following reasons:

- Reduction in best corrected vision which is improved by contact lenses
- Keratoplasty
- Marked corneal irregularities, including trauma, surgery or significant ectasia
- Astigmatism over 4.00D
- Anisometropia (difference between right and left prescriptions) over 4.00D
- High hyperopia (long sight) of over +10.00D
- High myopia (short sight) of over -15.00D
- Albinism, aniridia, coloboma, ptosis
- Therapeutic (bandage lens) applications
- Ocular cosmetic disfigurement
- Facial or dermatological conditions causing spectacle intolerance

If you have any questions, please telephone 01270 612209.

Reviewed by the Readers' Panel January 2015.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01270 612209.

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