

## Lens care neglected, study finds.

Although the number of consumers wearing daily-wear contact lenses is increasing, lens care compliance needs still aren't being met, a new report concludes.

Research from Bausch & Lomb says the best opportunity for establishing good care and compliance habits is when the patient first begins wearing contact lenses. However, patients say the amount of information they receive at the start of lens wear is declining.

**Patients who don't care for their lenses properly are less likely to be satisfied with their vision and thus more likely to stop wearing contact lenses.**

Bausch & Lomb presented its report, "Trends in Lens Care 1995," at the company's annual scientific meeting in Orlando, FL. The second annual report was drawn from more than \$2 million of market research data and will be made public on an annual basis to help eye care professionals meet the needs of their contact lens patients.

"There are several negative trends emerging in the area of lens care that require eye care professionals and manufacturers to work together to reverse," said William T. Rendel, OD, director of professional-

market development for Bausch & Lomb's Personal Products Division. "Reducing non-compliance and contact lens dropouts are important strategies for practice and industry growth."

"Trends in Lens Care 1995" addresses several categories that impact eye care professionals and their patients:

- Dynamics of the marketplace. More than 1 million people joined the ranks of contact lens patients in 1994. Disposable and planned-replacement lens wearers are the fastest-growing segments. However, patients who don't care for their lenses properly are less likely to be satisfied with their vision and thus more likely to stop wearing contact lenses.
- Profile of a soft contact lens wearer. The report says the average contact lens wearer is younger and more prosperous than the general population and is more likely to buy ancillary eye wear, such as sunglasses or a spare set of eyeglasses. Although market research shows that more than 30% of the 122 million wearers of glasses are interested in contact lenses, only 20% of glasses-only wearers said they had discussed contact lenses with their eye care practitioner.

Only 19% of patients know the consequences of failing to comply with a lens care regimen.

Among wearers of lenses dispensed for a 1- to 2-week replacement schedule, only 62% said they replace the lenses every 2 weeks or less. More than 2.6 million daily wearers remove their lenses but don't clean them, and 890,000 daily wearers remove their lenses every night but don't disinfect and store them properly.

The key, according to the report, is that the majority of patients are told how to clean, disinfect, and store their lenses, but not many are told why these things are important. Only about 19% of patients know the consequences of failing to comply with a lens care regimen, and less than half are given written instructions to take home.

"We anticipate that the information covered in this new report will help eye care professionals identify opportunities to increase loyalty to their practice as well as to further recognize the economic value of a thriving contact lens patient base," said Robert J. Novander, vice president of professional marketing and sales for Bausch & Lomb.

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