

Disrupting the Dropout Dilemma: Practical Steps to Keep Patients in Contact Lenses

Fall 2024





Earlier this year, the **Contact Lens Institute™** shared its findings on how practice behaviors can help attract new wearers, sparking discussions across the eye care profession. Seemingly simple actions can have sizable impacts on patient preferences—a theme that has been present across many of our [See Tomorrow](#) research initiatives.

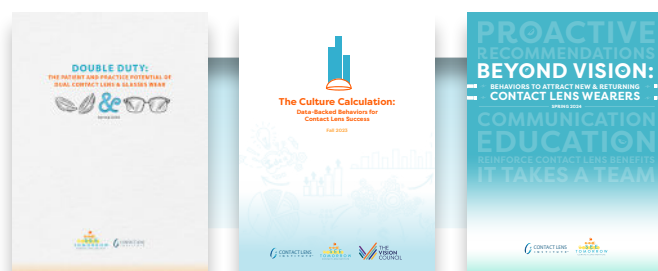
We are equally as excited about our latest work, tackling the flip side of that conversation: retaining current contact lens wearers, with all the benefits for their vision and practices alike.

Dropout has been a challenge for decades. It is experienced across the sector on a global basis, regardless of geography, practice setting, or other variables that may lend themselves to a solution. One study found that as many as one in four patients cease contact lens wear in the first year ([Sulley, et al., 2017](#))—a data point that would sound alarms in most other areas of commerce, yet commonly eliciting a 'that's the way it is' sentiment in eye care.

Considering how significantly contact lens offerings have advanced in recent years, and the ingenuity and clinical expertise of practitioners, we believe there has never been a better time to make headway against this issue. Our new research builds on prior studies, identifying why both new wearers and long-term wearers choose to continue using this form of vision correction. By isolating the benefits and identifying detractors, everyone involved in the care spectrum—from doctors to administrative staff—can better understand their role in facilitating success.

In addition to a rich collection of data, many of our 2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionaries offer guidance on transforming the findings into best practices.

There's a high likelihood that this report will become an invaluable resource across your office, stimulating discussion and serving as a catalyst for implementing new approaches with your contact lens wearers—especially those more recently fit.



We also encourage you to browse our past [See Tomorrow publications](#), all of which are designed to inspire patient and practice success.

Contact lenses are some of the most ingenious and widely used medical devices on the planet, so ubiquitous that we may take them for granted at times. As you page through this report, you'll see that more explicitly and energetically engaging patients about all they bring to vision and life—taking only seconds, in some cases—can make a world of difference in disrupting the dropout dilemma.



Stan Rogaski
Executive Director
Contact Lens Institute



Carla Mack, OD, MBA, FAAO, FBCLA
2024 Board Chair
Contact Lens Institute

HIGH-IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

HIGH WEARER SATISFACTION. Overall contact lens satisfaction is high across all patients. **67% of new contact lens wearers (<2 years)** said they were **highly satisfied**. This soars to **86% among long-term wearers (≥2 years)**—an affirmation that helping patients during their earlier stages is imperative. [Page 7](#)

ACKNOWLEDGED BENEFITS. Four factors emerged as the greatest satisfaction drivers among new and long-term wearers alike: **comfort, vision, freedom from glasses, and convenience**. [Page 8](#)

DETRACTORS TO WEAR. When asked to rank their top five reasons for dissatisfaction, **cost, handling, comfort, vision, and convenience** were most cited. New wearers indicated much more sensitivity to all possibilities that were offered—an indicator of the vital need to provide an elevated level of support for neophytes. [Page 10](#)

LONG-TERM LOYALTY. Once contact lens wearers cross the **two-year mark**, they are highly unlikely to pause use in the future. Among those long-term respondents, **87% have never stopped wearing their contact lenses**. [Page 6](#)

CROSS-TEAM IMPORTANCE. New wearers' choices to continue contact lens use are significantly more affected by the **entire practice team—doctors, opticians, technicians, optical staff, and administrative staff**—especially through their interactions with non-clinical staff. [Page 22](#)

PREFERRED PRACTICE BEHAVIORS. Patients say that many behaviors by doctors and staff impact their decision to continue contact lens wear. Top-ranked actions include **changing a prescription to adapt to lifestyle changes**, providing **trial/diagnostic lenses**, providing **wear and care assistance**, helping patients **navigate cost, upgrading contact lenses** as needed, and offering **price/performance options**. New wearers value many practice behaviors even more. [Page 11](#)

CHALLENGES OVERCOME. Patients believe that practices are well positioned to help **overcome obstacles** to contact lens wear, including concerns with **vision and comfort, handling, convenience, and cost**—with **specific doctor and staff actions** identified that can make a difference for each. [Pages 16-19](#)

INFORMATION PLEASE. The practice staff ranks high as a source of contact lens information for patients. New wearers exhibit a **sizable thirst for knowledge** compared to long-term wearers. This was particularly apparent with their reliance on friends and family as a source of information. [Page 25](#)

REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS. More than half of all patients shared that having a **good relationship with their eye doctor and exam staff** had significant or considerable influence on their election to purchase contact lenses directly from them. The opinions of new wearers were even more shaped by the relationship. [Page 26](#)

DUAL WEAR DYNAMICS. Among new wearers, **60% said talking about interchanging contact lens and glasses** with the practice team was highly or somewhat **likely to influence continued contact lens wear**. [Page 28](#)

COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS. **74% of new wearers** said they followed contact lens replacement instructions from their eye care professional, with **long-term wearers coming in at 65%**—a reminder to **reinforce healthy wear and care habits** with contact lens veterans. [Page 5](#)

TIME AFTER TIME. While spending more time with a patient equates to greater trust in recommendations, that's well within most practice standards: the **median perception of 'adequate' exam time is 16-20 minutes** for both new and long-term wearers. [Page 30](#)



PROGRAM BACKGROUND & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Contact Lens Institute's (CLI) [See Tomorrow](#) series explores consumer and professional perspectives regarding issues that can influence contact lens fitting and wear. Since 2021, it has evolved to examine consumer lifestyle changes as well as critical, yet largely overlooked, prescribing and purchasing factors. In many cases, the work has shed light on sentiments that go unvoiced by patients, in turn improving care and practice management regimens.

This year's efforts have focused on discovering what matters to prospective and current contact lens patients when it comes to their interactions with eye care practice staff. The Spring 2024 report explored elements that helped attract new or resumed wear, while the Fall 2024 report in your hands probes potential new dimensions that impact wearer retention (a.k.a., reducing dropout).

CLI commissioned [Prodege](#), a global research firm, to assist with the latest work. From August 9-21, 2024, it surveyed **401 vision-corrected adults (aged 18-64)** residing in the United States using a proprietary online tool. All reported wearing soft contact lenses at least once per week.

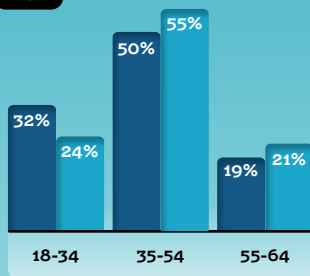
Participants were segmented into new wearer (**NW: less than two years of wear**) and long-term wearer (**LTW: two or more years of wear**) groups, spanning people who were fit only weeks earlier to those who have worn contact lenses for more than two decades.

The respondents reflect the patients seen every day in eye care settings across the country, with a mix of household incomes, regions, genders, employment, education, age, and contact lens type. 80% report having some form of vision insurance.

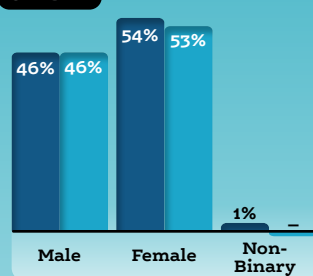
Respondent Overview

■ New Wearers (<2 Years) ■ Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

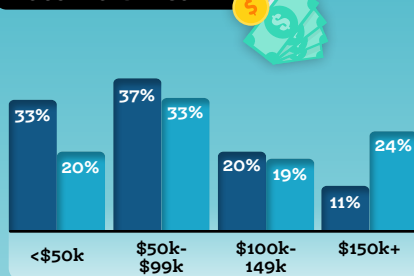
AGE



GENDER



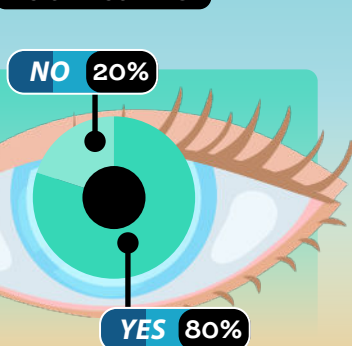
HOUSEHOLD INCOME



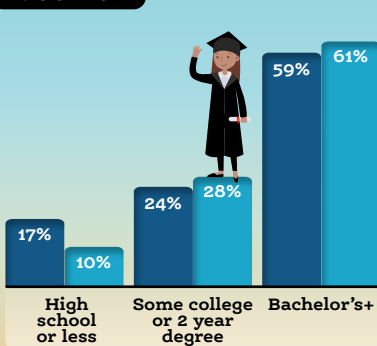
EMPLOYMENT



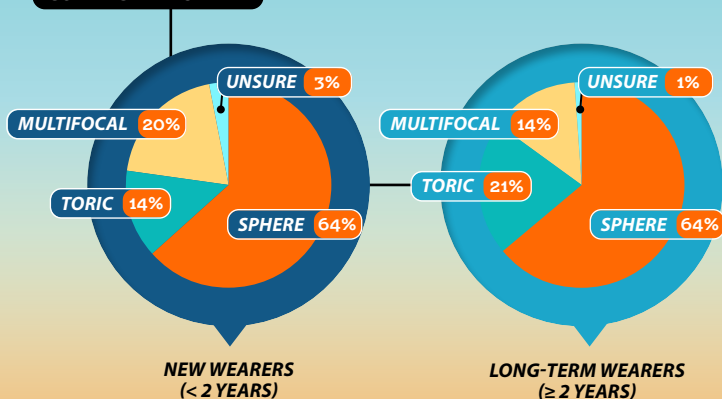
VISION INSURANCE



EDUCATION



CONTACT LENS TYPE



GOOD HABITS

Thanks to sustained efforts across the eye care community, U.S. contact lens wearers in the study generally exhibited good compliance with lens replacement frequency recommendations with room for improvement, noting this was self-reported.

74% of new wearers said they **followed replacement instructions from their eye care professional, with long-term wearers coming in at 65%**—a reminder to reinforce healthy wear and care habits with contact lens veterans. **Lack of compliance was most notable among daily disposable wearers**, with 17% of new wearers and 31% of long-term wearers saying they stretched their replacement schedules.

Encouragingly, **annual exams have been a regular occurrence for four of five respondents** (NW: 81%, LTW: 79%), with about **95% of contact lens wearers visiting their eye care professional at least every two years** (NW: 94%, LTW: 95%).



The EASY Way (Eyes, Awareness, Safety & You), developed by the Contact Lens Institute to promote healthy wear and care, includes simplified tips, attention-grabbing infographics, and companion digital resources for use in practices. Presented in a memorable and straightforward way, the components are available for free download within The EASY Way resource page on [ContactLensInstitute.org](https://www.contactlensinstitute.org).





NEW WEARER SENSITIVITIES

In 2017, *Contact Lens and Anterior Eye* published "Factors in the Success of New Contact Lens Wearers" (Sulley A, et al.), exploring elements associated with retention and dropout. While identifying that **26% abandon wear within the first year**, perhaps even more telling was that **47% of that subgroup left within the first two months**.

It's clear that recently fit patients are more susceptible to walking away from the category—and all that contact lenses potentially bring to their vision and their lives.

Across the latest CLI data set, the distinctions between neophytes and veteran wearers are readily apparent. In large part, new contact lens users are more information hungry, more reliant on counsel from all members of the practice team, and more sensitive to influences and behaviors that either encourage or dissuade continued wear.

Treating new wearers differently can pay dividends.

An upshot is that the new CLI data suggests that once wearers cross the two-year mark, they are highly unlikely to pause contact lens use in the future. Among those long-term respondents, **87% have never stopped wearing their contact lenses**, and another **9% paused more than two years ago**—a remarkable sign of what's possible.

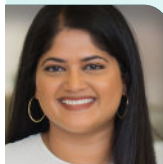


YEAR 1

YEAR 2



Fitting contact lenses for new wearers requires a different approach. It's important to provide tailored advice based on their unique lifestyle and eye health needs—personalized guidance will set them up for success. CLI data show that **patients are unlikely to pause contact lens use after the two-year mark**. By offering thoughtful and individualized support, eye care professionals can help new wearers adapt more smoothly, fostering a positive experience and improving overall satisfaction with their lenses."



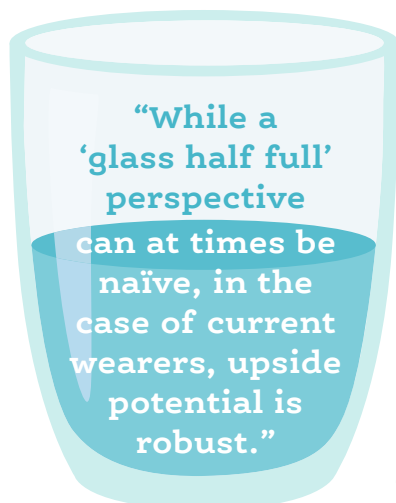
Monica Bhula, OD
Texas Vision, Cedar Park, Texas
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

ASSESSING WEARER SATISFACTION: UPSIDE OPPORTUNITY

There's little doubt that the progress made in contact lens technologies, clinical expertise, and patient experience over recent years have led to positive outcomes for wearers. The latest CLI data overwhelmingly confirm this.

Overall contact lens satisfaction is high across all patients. **Two of three (67%) new wearers** said they were **highly satisfied**, ranking their approval from 8-10 on a 10-point scale. This soars to **86% among long-term wearers**—another affirmation that encouraging patients during their earlier stages is imperative.

Closing that **19-point percentage gap** may come from helping neophytes better understand the full range of contact lens benefits and advantages, as illustrated throughout this



report. At the same time, there remains opportunity to elevate the experiences of patients who score their contact lens satisfaction as moderate (4-7 on a 10-point scale)—33% of new wearers and 12% of long-term wearers.

Of note is the **minimal number of current contact lens wearers who scored their experience as predominantly dissatisfied** (NW: 2%, LTW: 1%). While a 'glass half full' perspective can at times be naïve, in the case of current wearers, upside potential is robust.

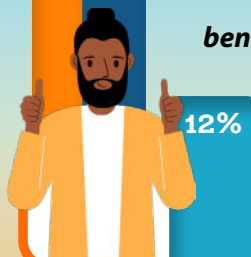
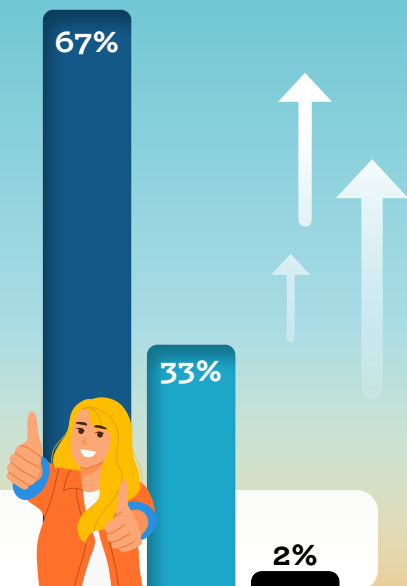
"Consider that two-thirds of new contact lens wearers are highly satisfied. That's not bad. But if we work to keep them happy and healthy in their lenses, their positive attitudes become even more pronounced the longer they continue wear. That level of enthusiasm can create patients for life, extending to other aspects of the practice and bringing in friends and family through referrals," observed **Jason Compton, OD, of Compton Eye Associates and a CLI Visionary**.

Contact Lens Satisfaction Soars with Patient Experience

- Highly Satisfied
- Moderately Satisfied
- Dissatisfied

Overall contact lens satisfaction is high among all wearers, though a 19-POINT DIFFERENCE in high satisfaction rates indicates the OPPORTUNITY to help new wearers (<2 years) appreciate the full range of contact lens benefits and advantages.

New Wearers (<2 Years)



Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

ASSESSING WEARER SATISFACTION: UPSIDE OPPORTUNITY (CONT'D)

The Drivers

Delving deeper, what specific aspects of their contact lenses do people point to for their satisfaction? CLI offered 11 possibilities based on prior research and clinical experience, asking respondents to rank their top five.

Four of these emerged as the highest among new and long-term wearers alike: **comfort** (NW: 61%, LTW: 69%), **vision** (NW: 51%, LTW: 67%), **freedom from glasses** (NW: 46%, LTW: 61%), and **convenience** (NW: 46%, LTW: 51%).

In most instances though, new wearers did not share the same level of satisfaction as the long-term group—an occurrence in seven of the 11 categories. This observation points to the opportunity for practice teams to reinforce those benefits with more recently fit patients through active discussion and reminders.

In fact, according to the same data set, **new wearers cited the role of doctors and staff as a satisfaction driver 30% more than veteran patients.**

NEW WEARERS: THREE STEPS TO REINFORCE CONTACT LENS BENEFITS

1 Emphasize Comfort and Eye Health

Explain how today's contact lenses are designed to maximize moisture and breathability for all-day comfort. Inquire about the patient's current level of comfort and offer trial of alternative options if they are not satisfied with their current lens. Reinforce that regular lens care and compliance with the prescribed wear schedule help ensure both comfort and eye health.

2 Showcase Superior Visual Quality

Highlight that contact lenses provide a more natural field of vision compared to glasses. They sit directly on the eye, offering sharp and stable vision. Ask about the patient's hobbies as a way to personalize the conversation when describing the applicable vision benefits of contact lenses.

3 Promote Freedom and Convenience in Daily Life

Reinforce the idea that contact lenses free wearers from the restrictions of glasses—no more fogging up, slipping off, or interfering with activities like sports and outdoor adventures. They also allow wearers to easily use sunglasses or protective eyewear and simplify daily routines, making them a convenient choice for busy lifestyles.



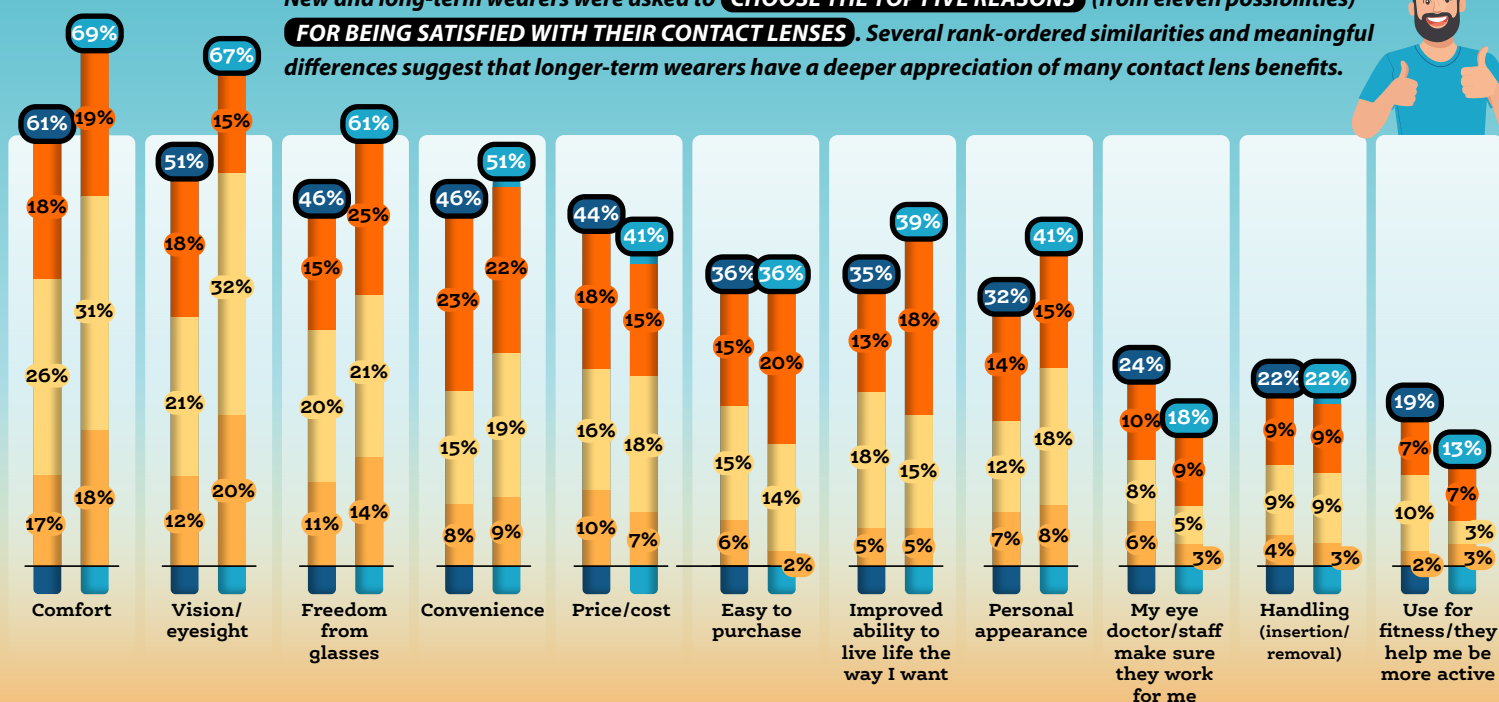
Dana Shannon, OD, FAAO

Clarendon Vision Advanced Eyecare, Westmont, Ill.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Drivers of Contact Lens Satisfaction



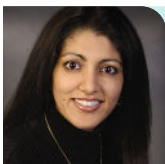
New and long-term wearers were asked to **CHOOSE THE TOP FIVE REASONS** (from eleven possibilities) **FOR BEING SATISFIED WITH THEIR CONTACT LENSES**. Several rank-ordered similarities and meaningful differences suggest that longer-term wearers have a deeper appreciation of many contact lens benefits.



ASSESSING WEARER SATISFACTION: UPSIDE OPPORTUNITY (CONT'D)

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The world of contact lenses is unknown to a new wearer. It is our job to show them—through our words—what possibilities exist. The freedom from glasses alone can improve patients' quality of life. Point out flexibility in daily activities, relief from weight on the ears and nose, better peripheral vision, an ability to focus on tasks instead of the visual device on their face, improved mobility without the risk of dropping spectacles, and a less cumbersome wearing experience.”



Shalu Pal, OD, FAAO, FSLs, FBCLA, FIAOMC
Dr. Shalu Pal & Associates, Toronto, Ontario
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

THE DETRACTORS

Many of the same aspects of contact lens use that contribute to continued wear can also create angst. When asked to rank their **top five reasons for dissatisfaction**, **cost** (NW: 49%, LTW: 41%), **handling** (NW: 40%, LTW: 32%), **comfort** (NW: 39%, LTW: 19%), **vision** (NW: 35%, LTW: 19%), and **convenience** (NW: 35%, LTW: 16%) were most cited.

New wearers indicated much more sensitivity to all nine possibilities that were offered, in many instances at 15 points or more compared to the long-term respondents—another indicator of the vital need to provide an elevated level of support for neophytes.

Another insight emerged from long-term wearer perspectives. **Price sensitivity as the greatest dissatisfaction issue** (LTW #1 rank: 28%) suggests that practice teams should prepare for this conversation, especially when presenting patients with options for more technologically advanced or premium contact lenses.

ADDRESSING PRICE BY PROVIDING VALUE

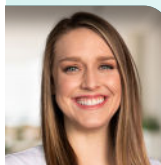


When discussing contact lenses with patients, shifting focus to the value rather than the price helps highlight how quality lenses are an investment in long-term eye health. Explain that certain contact lens technology and materials may improve comfort by helping to decrease dryness and irritation, potentially reducing the need for future treatments or complications that could end up being more costly. Contact lenses can also enhance a range of different lifestyles, with prescriptions evolving as patients' lives and vision change.

To make the price seem more manageable, **break it down into a daily cost**—for example, a **\$300 annual supply is only \$0.82 per day, which is comparable to a cup of self-brewed coffee**. Relating the expense to familiar items can help patients better grasp the value of their purchase.

Be sure to also mention savings options such as rebates or the cost advantages of purchasing an annual supply, which can add convenience for both patient and practice. Customize your recommendations based on each patient's needs, whether it's lenses for eye strain relief or for an active lifestyle—and emphasize the long-term benefits they offer.

By **reframing the conversation to focus on value, personalized care, health, and lifestyle benefits**, patients can see their contact lenses as a smart investment in comfort and eye health rather than simply an upfront cost.

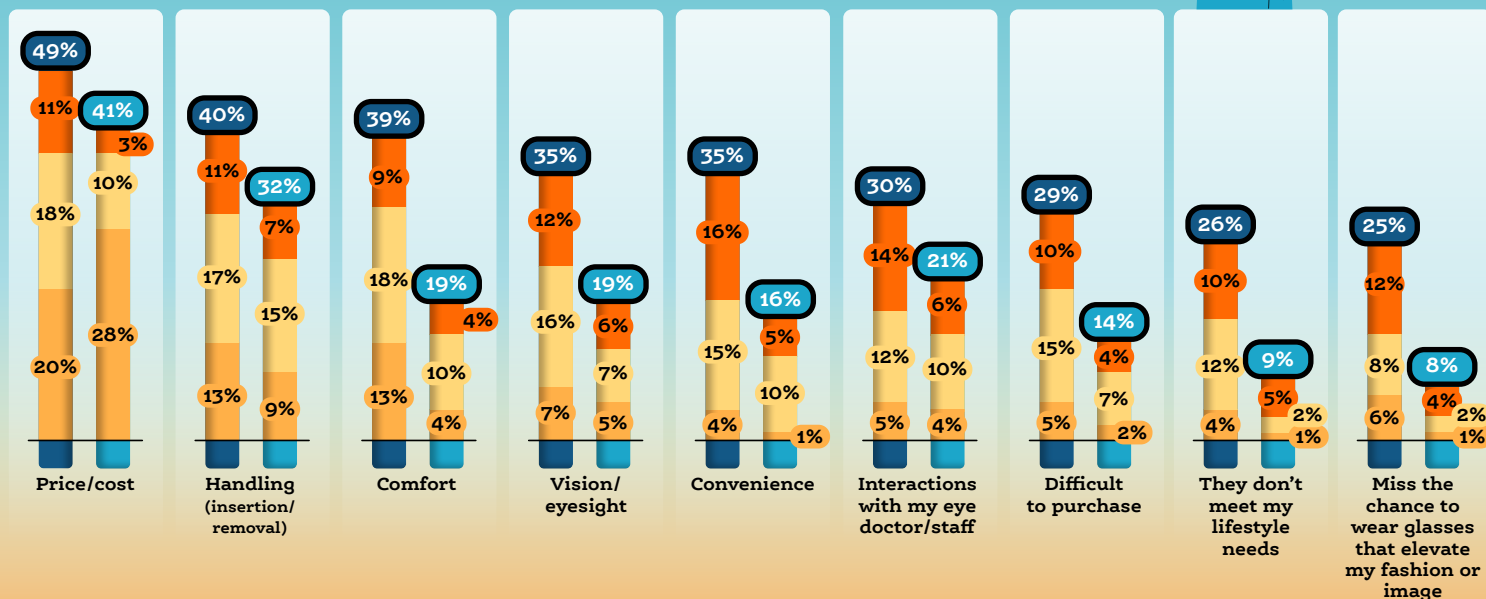


Jade Coats, OD
McDonald Eye Associates, Fayetteville, Ark.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Sources of Contact Lens Dissatisfaction

■ Top Reason
 ■ Top 2-3 Reasons
 ■ Top 4-5 Reasons
■ New Wearers (<2 Years)
 ■ Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

New and long-term wearers were asked to **CHOOSE THE TOP FIVE REASONS** (from nine possibilities) **FOR BEING DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR CONTACT LENSES**. Findings show that new wearers are considerably more sensitive to all factors, suggesting the need to provide more support to this group to reduce dropout rates.



THE ROLE OF DOCTOR & STAFF BEHAVIORS

It's a pragmatic adage: control what you can control.

When it comes to increasing contact lens retention rates, there is no better place to start than the behaviors of the entire exam team within a practice.

CLI asked respondents about specific interactions with doctors and staff, homing in on how these swayed continued contact lens use. There were similar viewpoints as to what were 'extreme' or 'great' influences, with **new wearers reporting higher impacts for all of the 20 choices** (with every new wearer response at 50% or greater).

Among the top tier of actions, many could be categorized as 'basics' by eye care practices. Yet discussions with CLI Visionaries and other practitioners suggest that such basics can be undervalued by the exam staff, who may not realize the level of importance placed on each by patients.



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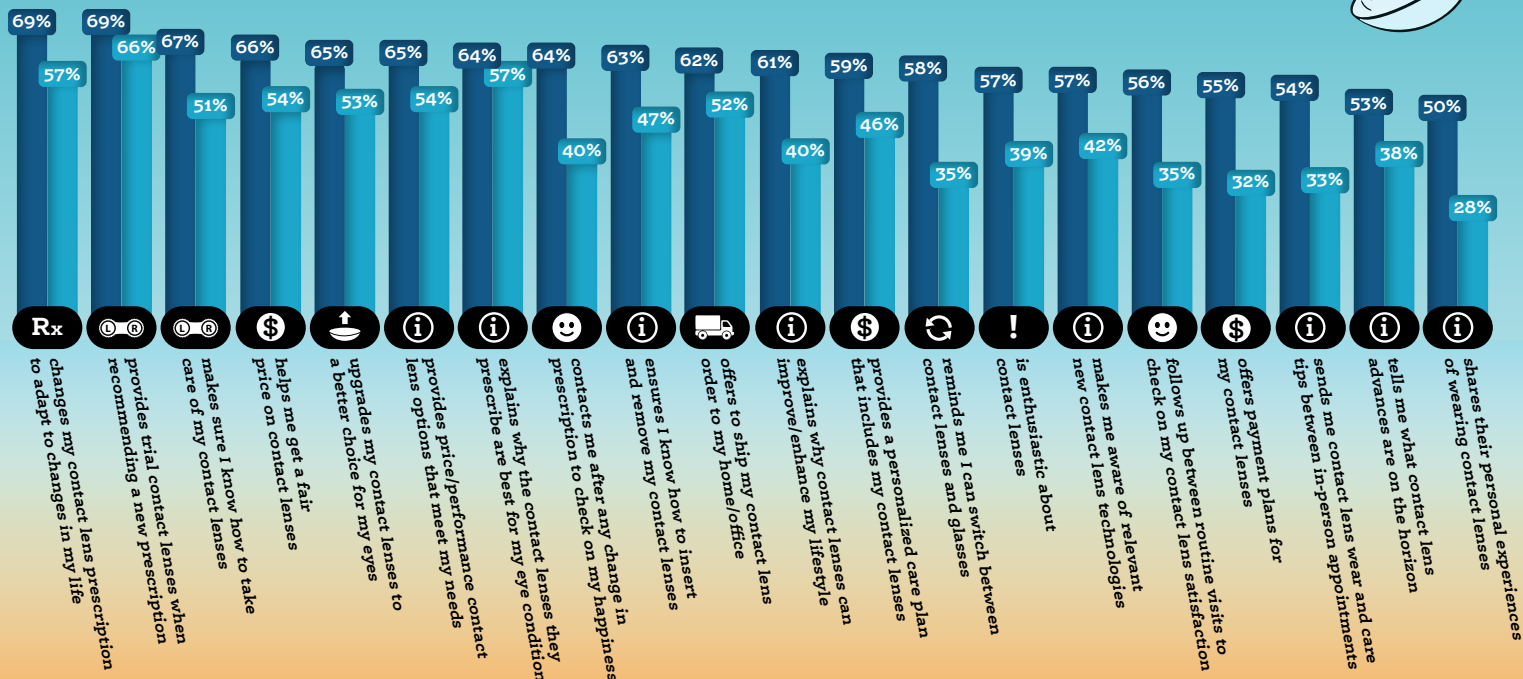
Influences on Continued Contact Lens Wear

New Wearers (<2 Years)

Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

Behaviors by doctors and exam staff influence contact lens patients' decisions to continue wear to varying degrees.

Across the board, NEW WEARERS ARE MORE AFFECTED BY POSITIVE ACTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS undertaken by practice teams.



THE ROLE OF DOCTOR & STAFF BEHAVIORS (CONT'D)

These include **changing the prescription to adapt to lifestyle changes** (NW: 69%, LTW: 59%), **providing trial/diagnostic lenses** (NW: 69%, LTW: 66%), **providing wear and care assistance** (NW: 67%, LTW: 51%), **helping patients navigate cost** (NW: 66%, LTW: 54%), **upgrading contact lenses as needed** (NW: 65%, LTW: 53%), and **offering price/performance options** (NW: 65%, LTW: 54%).

Dialing Up Diagnostic Demand

The influence of diagnostic contact lenses has been apparent in multiple CLI See Tomorrow reports. When glasses-only patients were asked about factors that would motivate them to try contact lenses for the first time, 51% said the availability of trial lenses ([Beyond Vision; Spring 2024](#)). Perhaps even more surprising is that only 10% of glasses-only wearers said they were offered contact lens trials at their most recent exam ([Double Duty; Spring 2023](#)).

"Patients consistently rank being provided with diagnostic contact lenses as essential to adoption and wear. Don't overlook their power, taking a moment to explain how you're giving them something of value," said Dr. Compton. "For instance, with my two-week and monthly wearers, we send an appointment reminder package that includes a pair of lenses in their current prescription that may offer more convenience or better fit their lifestyle. We ask the patients to give them a try. Our success rate is substantial, and even if we don't end up fitting that lens, it's a near guarantee of having them come back into the office."

And while new wearers tend to see all of the actions as beneficial, they more significantly differ from the long-term group on multiple fronts. A **post-visit check-in following a contact lens prescription change** is important, cited by **64% of neophytes** (24 points higher than long-term users). Other differences of note between new and long-term wearers include **dual wear (contact lens and glasses switching) discussions** (23 points higher), **offering payment plans** (22 points higher), **describing how contact lenses can enhance lifestyles** (21 points higher), and **maintaining contact between routine office visits** (21 points higher).

LIFESTYLE-CENTERED PRESCRIBING

Getting to know your patients beyond their vision needs is key to recommending the right contact lenses. Here are a few tips:



Ask About Their Daily Routine

Find out what their typical day looks like—do they work long hours at a computer, play sports, or have a busy schedule? This helps you suggest lenses that match their activities, like ones that help with eye strain or stay comfortable during exercise.

How it helps: You can offer lenses that fit seamlessly into their lifestyle, making their vision clearer and more comfortable throughout the day.



Talk About Screen Time and Eye Fatigue

Ask how much time patients spend in front of screens and if they feel eye strain or dryness. This can guide you to recommend lenses designed to reduce digital eye fatigue or retain moisture.

How it helps: Patients will appreciate lenses that may help keep their eyes feeling fresh during long hours of screen use.



Check Their Environment and Allergies

Find out if they work in dry or air-conditioned places or if they have allergies. Lenses with more moisture or daily disposables can help prevent irritation in these situations.

How it helps: You can explain how certain lenses will keep their eyes more comfortable in challenging environments.

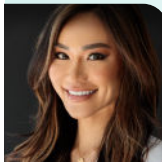


Ask About Their Lifestyle and Hobbies

Inquire if patients are into activities like hiking, swimming, or fitness. Do they spend weekends outdoors or prefer a low-key, relaxed routine? This helps you recommend the right lens type—whether it's more durable lenses for active lifestyles or dailies for those who want convenience.

How it helps: By understanding their hobbies, you can suggest lenses that fit their activities and make their lives easier, whether it's for active adventures or everyday wear.

By learning more about patients' habits and preferences, you can recommend contact lenses that fit their daily lives and keep them comfortable, encouraging them to stick with contacts long-term.



Jennifer Tsai, OD

LINE OF SIGHT, New York, N.Y.

2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

THREE WAYS TO KEEP IN CONTACT BETWEEN APPOINTMENTS



Send Automated Email Reminders

Regular email check-ins or reminders about upcoming appointments can help keep patients engaged. Include helpful tips like proper contact lens care or reminders to reorder lenses. This keeps the lines of communication open and reinforces the doctor-patient relationship.



Create Educational Content

Share short, valuable content like videos or blog posts on your website or social media about topics relevant to contact lens wearers. This could include advice on managing dry eyes, lens hygiene, or how to handle seasonal allergies. Consistent communication can position your practice as a reliable resource, strengthening patient loyalty.



Offer Virtual Follow-Up Consultations

For patients who might have minor concerns or questions about their lenses, offering quick virtual consultations can help address issues without needing a full appointment. This maintains a proactive connection and shows patients that their care extends beyond just in-office visits.



Jason E. Compton, OD, FAAO
Compton Eye Associates, New York, N.Y.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

“

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EXPLAIN THE VALUE OF DIAGNOSTIC LENSES

As optometrists, **having diagnostic soft contact lenses on hand is a game changer**. It allows us to immediately assess comfort, fit, and vision clarity right in the office, ensuring that patients leave happy and confident. When patients can try lenses during their appointment, we can fine-tune the fit and select the best lens for their specific needs, including if they require lenses for astigmatism, presbyopia, or both.

The technology behind soft contact lenses today gives us an incredible range of materials and modalities, from daily to monthly lenses, which we can use to tailor the perfect fit in real time. This reduces chair time significantly and minimizes the need for follow-up visits, saving time for both the patient and the practice. Take a few seconds to describe the role that these diagnostic lenses play—explain those benefits and value.

Patients love the convenience of trying the lenses in-office and walking out with lenses that feel great and provide clear, stable vision. It's a win-win for everyone—happier patients and a more efficient workflow in the clinic.



Ariel Cerenzie, OD, FAAO, FSLs

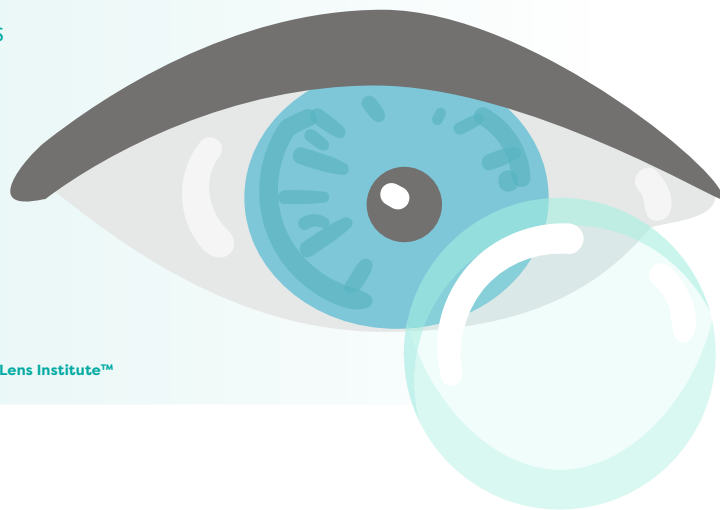
Charlotte Contact Lens Institute, Charlotte, N.C.

2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Charlotte Contact Lens Institute is not affiliated with the Contact Lens Institute™

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When patients can try lenses during their appointment, we can fine-tune the fit and select the best lens for their specific needs, including if they require lenses for astigmatism, presbyopia, or both.”



THE LIFESTYLE MOTIVATION

With a sizable number of current wearers stating that understanding **how contact lenses extremely or greatly improve their lifestyles impacts their choice to continue wear** (NW: 61%, LTW: 40%), what specific lifestyle aspects register higher?

Research participants were asked to envision they were facing a challenge with contact lens wear, with a solution that would require some personal effort for resolution. Respondents were then presented with a dozen lifestyle factors that would motivate them to press forward.

Four emerged as the most important among both segments: allowing **freedom from glasses** (NW: 48%, LTW: 49%), **confidence in having the best possible vision** (NW: 39%, LTW: 43%), **better comfort than glasses** (NW: 38%, LTW: 46%), and **greater convenience compared to glasses** (NW: 37%, LTW: 49%).

The sizable deltas between the groups for greater comfort (LTW: 8 points higher) and convenience (LTW: 12 points higher), as well as for knowing that contacts help a respondents live life the way they want (NW: 24%, LTW: 32%; LTW 8 points higher), are telling.

"I always take steps to ensure I know the patient's goals—what they plan to use their contact lenses for. If they're new wearers, I spend even more time on that, so that I recommend the right technology and the right modality. And for established wearers, I'm asking questions to make sure their contact lenses are still meeting their needs, especially with astigmatic and presbyopic patients where we've had technology advances over the past few years," said **Janelle Davison, OD, of Brilliant Eyes Vision Center and a CLI Visionary**.

Wearers for more than two years seemingly appreciate lifestyle benefits more, after having had time to integrate contact lens wear into their day-to-day experiences. The eye care community may benefit from more outwardly helping new wearers 'see' these advantages, pointing out the lifestyle pluses that are likely to be experienced as contact lens use continues.

REINFORCING LIFESTYLE BENEFITS WITH NEW WEARERS

When something is new to us, "**We don't know what we don't know.**" The same goes for first time contact lens wearers, who cannot often see all the benefits—yet! Our patients want to live better lives, and it's our job to help guide the new wearer through the process. We can all add value to the contact lens exam, evaluation, and training experience by reinforcing lifestyle benefits:



Ask deeper lifestyle questions to understand personal goals

We know to ask lifestyle questions about work, hobbies, tasks, etc., but sometimes we need to respectfully dig a little deeper and inquire about any personal lifestyle improvement goals. Sometimes they want to feel better about their appearance, physically and/or mentally. For instance, **31% of new wearers say that being active in fitness and sports** is a reason for continued contact lens use. Active questioning may take a few moments, but can lead to higher motivation, which is the cornerstone to new wearer training/I&R success.



Highlight the immediate, positive visual impact

43% of long-term wearers cite contact lenses as giving the best possible vision as a reason to continue, but only **39% of new wearers** see that as an impactful benefit. We've all witnessed a patient who has a high prescription or even notable astigmatism put on their first pair of contact lenses, blink, look around the room, and their jaw drops at how clear things are in every direction! It's such a reward. When moving from the exam lane to the optical, the practitioner or optician should **help the patient take a moment in a more expansive setting (or look out a window)** to see how much clearer and open the world can seem without glasses. Let it soak in and share in the excitement.



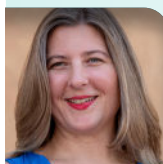
Reinforce the benefits of contact lenses with real-life success stories

We often forget the endless success stories from previous new wearers. **Testimonials from patients** about new freedoms and experiences that come from wearing contacts are something you cannot put a price on. Retelling some of those can help patients associate or relate to the real world benefits and new opportunities that contact lenses deliver.



Celebrate the milestone in the office

The pure **freedom of not wearing glasses** can change a person's entire perspective of themselves. When they walk out the door, their lives will have changed; it's almost guaranteed that family and friends will notice the difference. Start things off by celebrating in the office when a patient has completed their training. Make sure your entire team knows who's undergoing a new training/I&R, then for everyone to comment about "seeing the new look," making sure the patient leaves with the biggest smile.



Jennifer Seymour Brusven, LDO, NCLE-AC, ABO-AC, AAS
Yesnick Vision Center, Las Vegas, Nev.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES

The CLI research respondents validated what many in the eye care community have voiced as common challenges to wearer retention: **vision, comfort, handling, convenience, and cost**. Setting aside potential solutions over which doctors and staff do not have complete control, what actions by doctors and staff would decrease dropout?

Challenge: Vision & Comfort

Evaluating **10 possible actions by the practice team**, new wearers and long-term wearers were closely aligned, with seven behaviors being tapped at rates of 70% or more as very likely or likely to impact continued contact lens use. **'Fully listening to my concerns'** was highest ranked by both groups (NW: 80%, LTW: 84%). New wearers were much more likely to **appreciate post-visit outreach to check on vision or comfort** (NW: 77%, LTW 62%; NW 15 points higher).

"If a patient is facing a challenge, we ask active questions that encourage a more descriptive response. 'OK, let's work it out. Put your contacts in—what's happening? Can you share where the problem is coming from? In what situations is this happening at home or at work?' That approach combined with active listening helps us better overcome any issues, with a plan B always in the back of our heads," said **Jennifer Seymour Brusven, LDO of Yesnick Vision Center and a CLI Visionary**.

CREATING THE IDEAL FOLLOW UP

Data revealed by CLI indicates that **new wearers, especially, appreciate follow up after their examination**. To the neophyte, the whole experience can be intimidating and overwhelming, if they don't feel like they have our ongoing support. While CLI's recent findings report high wearer satisfaction numbers (NW: 67%, LTW 86%), retention can be greatly influenced by the quality of follow up care. In fact, **77% of new wearers who participated in this study expressed gratitude for follow ups to check on their vision or comfort**.

And while **most long-term respondents** had been wearing contacts for ten years or more, **62% also expressed an appreciation for follow ups**. Clearly, all patients value our ongoing support—new and previous wearers alike. So, how can we make this happen amidst the daily chaos of practice operations? By making it a priority because it matters!

Best practice is for the optician or contact lens technician to **call the patient two to four weeks after their prescription is finalized**. And at their final appointment, let them know to expect this follow-up call. During the call, inquire how much they love their new contacts. Ask if they have any questions or concerns, while closely listening for any inferences of dissatisfaction they may not explicitly share. Remind them to call—anytime—should any come to mind.

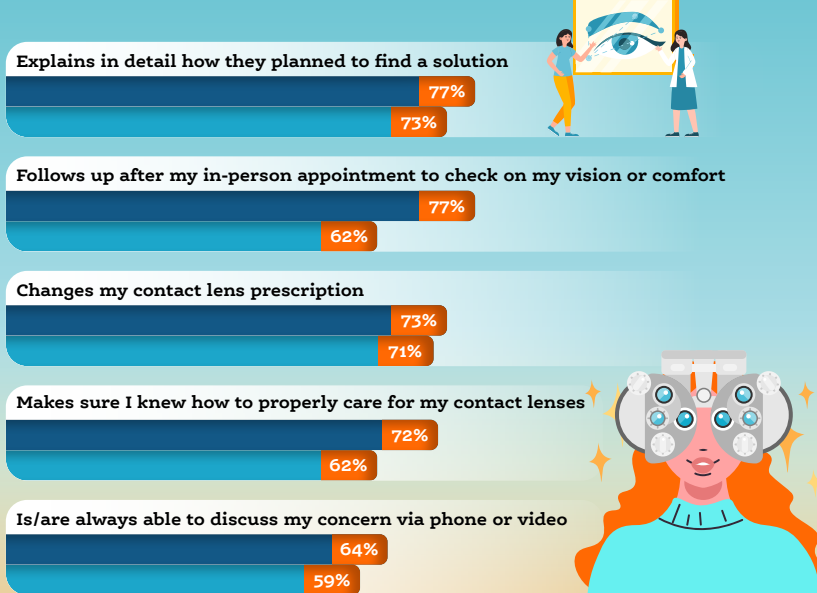
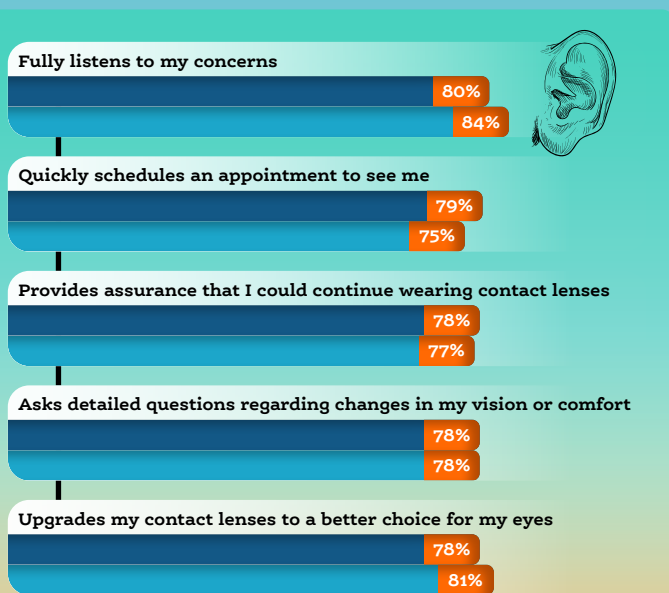
Incorporating such a protocol reassures the patient that you're there for them year-round, not just when it's time for their eye exam. It also adds that extra level of **personalized service and care** that today's consumers demand and appreciate.



Andrew S. Bruce, LDO, ABOM, NCLEM, FCLSA
ASB Opticianry Education Services, Vancouver, Wash.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Addressing Challenges: Vision & Comfort

When presented with a **CONTACT LENS-RELATED VISION OR COMFORT ISSUE**, new and long-term contact lens patients were asked which actions by doctors and exam staff would influence their choice to continue wear.



BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES (CONT'D)

Challenge: Handling

Respondents indicated a top detractor to continued contact lens wear was handling (NW: 40%, LTW: 32%), yet also believed in large part that doctors and staff can address insertion and removal challenges through several behaviors. Those rated as very likely or likely influences include **quickly scheduling an in-person appointment** (NW: 77%, LTW: 70%) or **telephone/video consultation** (NW: 76%, LTW: 56%), **providing additional in-person training** (NW: 74%, LTW: 55%), and **offering a contact lens with better handling characteristics** (NW: 74%, LTW: 66%). Note that one highly effective technique may be the most simple: **assuring patients they could continue wear** (NW: 75%, LTW: 69%).



Understanding the challenges some patients face with handling reminds us of the importance of thoroughly training our staff on what to watch for during contact lens training.”



SIMPLE STEPS TO HEIGHTEN HANDLING

An often-overlooked aspect of fitting contact lenses is **proper handling**. As doctors, we frequently **delegate insertion and removal training to our staff**, waiting until the patient succeeds before assessing the lenses on the eye to determine proper fit. However, understanding the challenges some patients face with handling reminds us of the importance of **thoroughly training our staff** on what to watch for during contact lens training.

Even some of the most comfortable lenses can pose difficulties, **particularly during insertion and removal**. This can lead to frustration and may contribute to patients discontinuing contact lens use. It's essential that our staff can recognize and communicate any handling difficulties, such as lenses appearing too large for the patient or consistently folding over during insertion. These issues are critical for the doctor to address. In some cases, **more practice is key**, and **scheduling an in-person follow-up within a week for new wearers can be crucial**. During this appointment, doctors can discuss the patient's experience with insertion and removal, offering further guidance and making necessary adjustments.

Additionally, **educating patients about the removal process** can set the right expectations. It's helpful to inform them that **removing lenses is usually easier at the end of the day** than immediately after insertion due to ocular chemistry and the condition of fresh lenses. Setting these expectations can reduce frustration and improve the overall experience. **Encouraging patients to share any difficulties** at their one-week follow-up and assuring them that solutions are available can enhance their confidence and comfort with contact lenses.



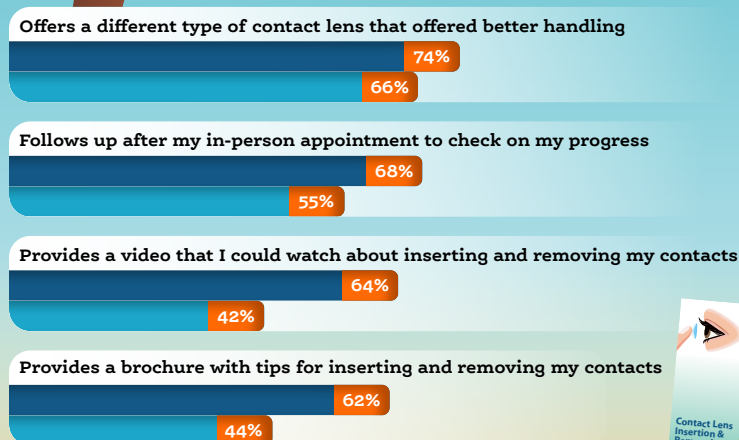
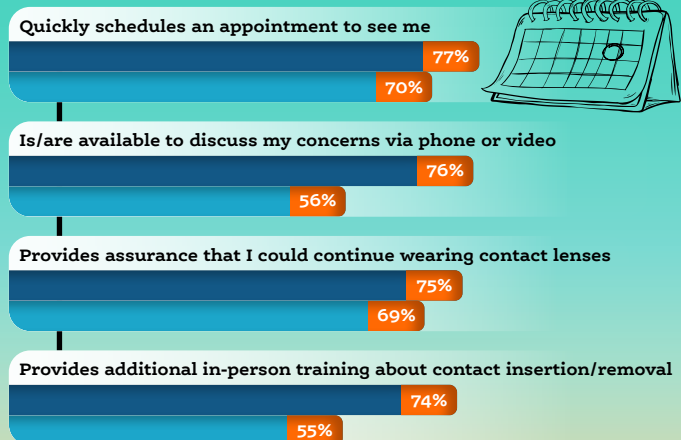
Ashley O'Dwyer, OD
Bay Mills Health Center, Brimley, Mich.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Addressing Challenges: Handling

When presented with a **HANDLING (INSERTION AND REMOVAL) ISSUE**, new and long-term contact lens patients were asked which actions by doctors and exam staff would influence their choice to continue wear.



- New Wearers (<2 Years)
- Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)



BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES (CONT'D)

Challenge: Convenience

As is the case across most of the findings in this report, new wearers are more impressionable than their long-term counterparts when doctors and staff act to address issues surrounding convenience. Among the top possibilities rated as very likely or likely to affect continued wear are **offering to ship lenses to a patient's home or office** (NW: 79%, LTW: 64%), **reinforcing why a prescribed lens is best for a specific condition** (NW: 77%, LTW: 66%), and **recommending an annual supply to reduce reordering** (NW: 77%, LTW: 67%). New wearers were significantly more influenced by **having a discussion about the ability to switch between contact lenses and glasses** (NW: 75%, LTW: 48%; NW 27 points higher)—the subject of CLI's widely circulated dual wear study ([Double Duty; Spring 2023](#)).



New wearers are more impressionable than their long-term counterparts when doctors and staff act to address convenience.”

THREE WAYS TO MAKE CONTACT LENSES MORE CONVENIENT



Ship contact lens orders, including trials, directly to the patient's address. For those who prefer office pickup, offer a hassle-free option without requiring an appointment, ensuring your staff is ready to assist seamlessly.



Select contact lenses that match the patient's lifestyle and visual needs. By taking the research out of their hands, you make the process simpler and more tailored to their individual requirements.



Provide written instructions with a personalized care plan, detailing daily wear time, replacement schedule, recommended solution, and when to switch to glasses. Supplying all the necessary tools removes any guesswork, creating a more convenient experience for your patient.



Noha Seif, OD, FAAO, FSLs

Contact Lens Institute of Seattle, Seattle, Wash.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

Contact Lens Institute of Seattle is not affiliated with the Contact Lens Institute™

Addressing Challenges: Convenience

When presented with a **CONTACT LENS CONVENIENCE ISSUE**, new and long-term contact lens patients were asked which actions by doctors and exam staff would influence their choice to continue wear.

New Wearers (<2 Years)

Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

Offers to ship my contact lens order to my home or office



79%
64%

Changes the tier of contact lens I'm prescribed to better match my lifestyle

78%
65%

Reinforces why the contact lenses prescribed are best for my eye condition

77%
66%

Offers an annual supply of contact lenses, so only need to reorder once/year

77%
67%

Offers contact lenses that can be replaced less frequently to fit my budget

75%
69%

Explains how I can wear both contact lenses and glasses depending on situation



75%
48%

Provides a personalized care plan to help make wearing contacts more convenient

73%
50%

Offers no-hassle pick up of my contact lens order from their office

70%
56%

Reminds me how contact lenses can improve/enhance my lifestyle

65%
47%



BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES (CONT'D)

Challenge: Cost

The entire respondent population indicated at least some price sensitivity, not unlike what is observed with most all categories of goods and services consumption. **Almost half (49%) of new wearers, having been unlikely to encounter contact lens pricing before, rank cost as their largest detractor to continued wear.** Yet at the same time, new wearers indicate the greatest openness to actions from the practice team that help overcome cost concerns, ranking them higher by double-digit percentages compared to long-term wearers for 10 of 12 potential behaviors. These include **providing alternative price/performance options** (NW: 79%, LTW: 60%), **explaining the total cost of purchase from the practice versus another source** (NW: 75%, LTW: 57%), and **changing the type of prescribed contact lens to better meet a patient's budget** (NW: 73%, LTW: 53%). For the long-term group, **making them aware of rebates and special pricing** holds the most potential (NW: 72%, LTW: 70%).

Success from Day One

Respondents were asked to describe what their eye doctor and/or staff could have done when they first began wearing contact lenses to help them experience even more enjoyment from the start (NW: n=181, LTW: n=167). Without any prompts, several actions stood out:

Provide more thorough insertion and removal training (NW: 23%, LTW: 14%)

Deliver better wear and care guidance (NW: 16%, LTW: 5%)

Discuss how to handle comfort issues (NW: 10%, LTW: 4%)

Offer more contact lens options, e.g., modality/tier/price (NW: 8%, LTW: 7%)

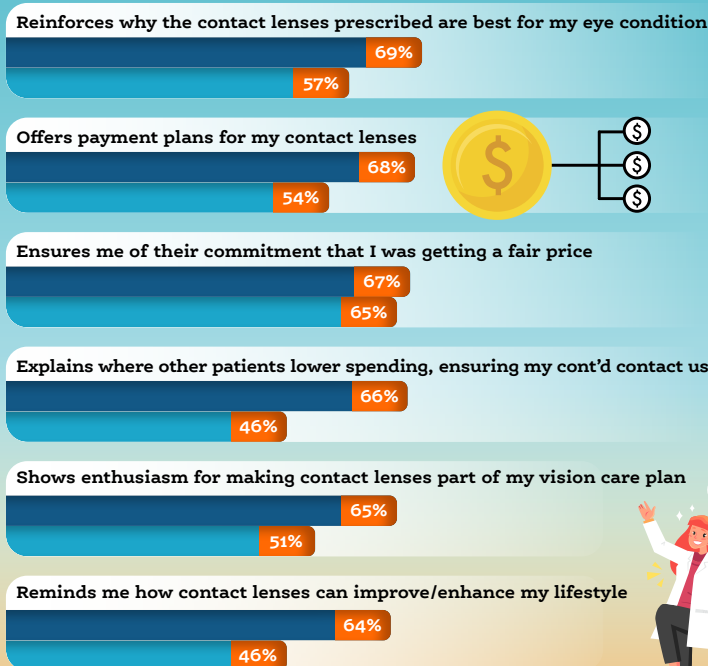
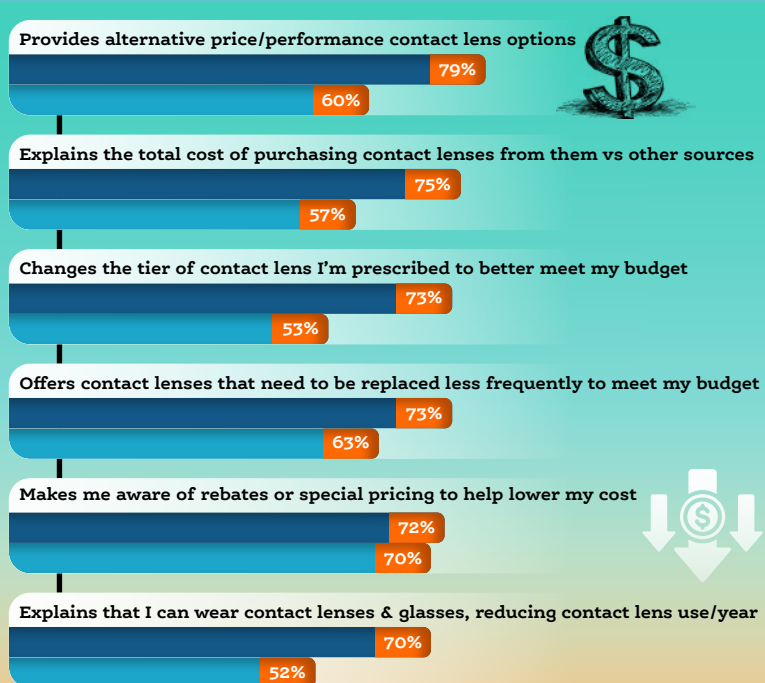


Addressing Challenges: Cost

When presented with a **CONTACT LENS COST ISSUE**, new and long-term contact lens patients were asked which actions by doctors and exam staff would influence their choice to continue wear.

New Wearers (<2 Years)

Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)



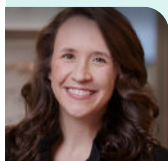
BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES (CONT'D)

DISCUSSING PRICE VS. PERFORMANCE OF CONTACT LENSES

When discussing recommendations for contact lenses with patients, **it's essential to weigh both performance and cost**. A higher price doesn't always mean better performance for every patient, but investing in the right type of lens for their specific needs can save the patient money and improve their overall satisfaction.

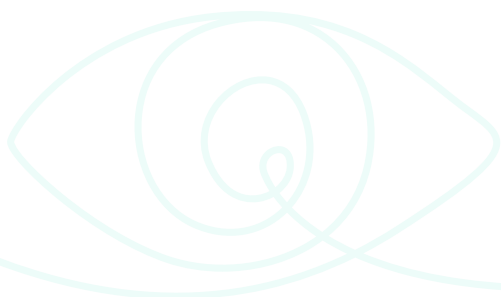
Getting to know my patient's specific interests, tasks, and activities for wearing contacts lenses is the first step to helping me better relay the best options. I then move into **comparing daily disposables vs bi-weekly/monthly** along with the option for **dual wear** with glasses. We discuss what option may benefit their lifestyle needs and that daily disposables are more of an investment but do have several benefits, including convenience, enhanced comfort, and a potentially reduced risk of infection. After that, I discuss **spherical, toric, monovision, and multifocal options** as applicable and tailor the discussion to the patient's prescription and their vision needs.

I find that it is better for me as a physician not to get into the specifics of pricing, but instead to share general terms and empower a staff member break those down plus educate the patient on insurance coverage and rebates. I prefer to focus on advising and recommending what I believe is the best option for the patients, then letting them decide if the price is worth the benefits.



Shelby Brogdon, OD
McFarland Eye Care, Little Rock, Ark.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

I prefer to focus on advising and recommending what I believe is the best option for the patients, then letting them decide if the price is worth the benefits.”

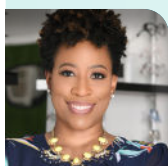


BEHAVIORS TO ADDRESS THE MOST COMMON ISSUES (CONT'D)

NO ASSUMPTIONS

I have learned not to judge a book by its cover, a principle I apply when interacting with both new and established contact lens wearers during their annual evaluations. I never assume a patient's ability to afford new contact lens innovations. Instead, I establish sustainable purchasing options, such as offering installment payments through third parties. **I utilize in-office technology to calculate patient out-of-pocket expenses and provide detailed, printed quotes for review.**

Additionally, I collaborate with my contact lens supplier to offer an app for ordering supplies, solutions, and reminder texts. Lastly, I offer text to pay, Apple Pay, Google Pay and Afterpay. As business practices evolve, embracing technology is crucial for enhancing office efficiency and improving patient experiences.



Janelle Davison, OD

Brilliant Eyes Vision Center / Visionary Dry Eye Institute, Cobb County, Ga.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

“

I never assume a patient's ability to afford new contact lens innovations. Instead, I establish sustainable purchasing options, such as offering installment payments through third parties.”



EVERYONE PLAYS A ROLE IN RETENTION

CLI's companion report about attracting new contact lens patients (*Beyond Vision; Spring 2024*) explained that everyone within an eye care practice has a vital role to encourage wear. The latest data shows that the same holds true for retention, to an even greater extent.

Current contact lens patients indicated varying degrees of influence among the practice team specific to continuing wear, with **optometrists or ophthalmologists holding the most sway** (NW: 74%, LTW: 59%), **followed by opticians** (NW: 64%, LTW: 52%).

Yet it was not only these positions alone that mattered: technicians/assistants, optical staff, and administrative staff all registered as being influential. What's remarkable is that **new wearers were significantly more affected by the entire practice team**, especially through their interactions with non-clinical staff compared to long-term wearers.



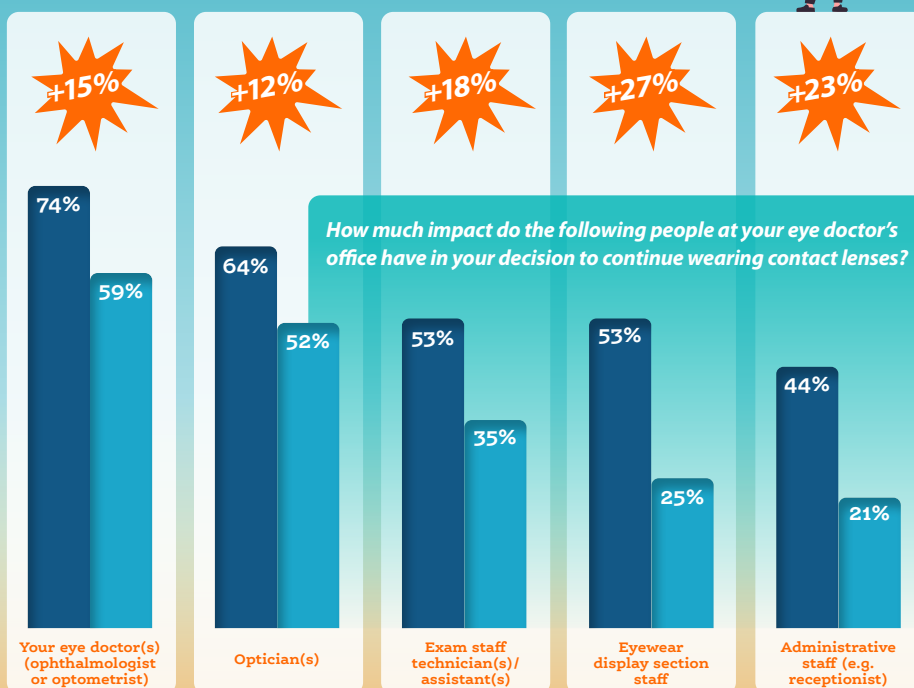
I never want to be the person in the office that knows the most. The more that I can delegate, the more I can teach. That means there are more hands that can be helpful in this process, which leads to more time with patients."

Shalu Pal, OD, FAAO, FSLs, FBCLA, FIAOMC
Dr. Shalu Pal & Associates, Toronto, Ontario

This suggests that more recently fit patients view much of the practice as being more knowledgeable about contact lenses, considering their limited personal experience. Even a small but misinformed comment on contact lenses by a staff member

The Entire Practice Team Inspires Continued Contact Lens Wear

All members of the practice team influence patients' decisions to continue wearing contact lenses. This is more pronounced among new wearers, at rates of **12-27% HIGHER than long-term wearers.**



EVERYONE PLAYS A ROLE IN RETENTION (CONT'D)

could lead to problems with a new wearer. Conversely, a positive informed comment could stimulate greater new wearer satisfaction. Both are critical reminders to ensure that the full team is educated and on board

"This comes back to making sure that every staff member is well trained and well versed to talk about contact lenses, the different types of lenses that are available, and at least provide some basic feedback and information regarding contacts," noted **Andrew Bruce, LDO, of ASB Opticianry Education Services and a CLI Visionary.**

"If anyone on staff doesn't have knowledge of contact lenses, or even worse—a fear of contact lenses—that can stop the patient's journey before it starts. It only takes one person in your office to talk negatively about contact lenses to change a patient's perception. We provide a no charge, comprehensive eye exam for our entire staff when hired and yearly after. We strongly encourage them to be fit with contact lenses, or if they don't need contacts, at least have a demo contact lens put on to experience how comfortable they can be," remarked **CLI Visionary Scott Moscow, OD.**

HOW I EXCITE MY STAFF ABOUT CONTACT LENSES

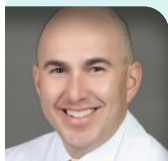
Many years ago, I was listening to one of my patients check in for his contact lens evaluation with our new receptionist. After learning it was a contact lens exam, the receptionist said, "I don't know how you wear contact lenses. I am so scared of them!"

I knew that our receptionist was not intentionally trying to discourage a contact lens evaluation, but what do you imagine that patient thought? Why would this staff member be scared of contact lenses? Has she seen a lot of eye infections secondary to contact lenses since she started working here? Should I stop using contact lenses?

This was an unintentional miscommunication that could have persuaded the patient to discontinue wear. **Patients look at everyone at our office as an expert. These 'expert opinions' can significantly influence our patients' decisions—for good or bad.**

To overcome this fear of contact lenses, we perform a full exam for willing staff, with or without a contact lens evaluation at no charge. During the exam, we strongly encourage a contact lens demo for staff members who did not want a full contact lens evaluation, including those with no prescription. **We want everyone to see how comfortable a contemporary contact lens feels on the eye.**

This process has not only eliminated nearly all fears that some staff members had of contact lenses, but also converted many who never thought they could use contact lenses into wearers. Even staff members who were given a contact lenses demo but declined an evaluation are still able to communicate that today's contact lenses are comfortable and easy to use.



Scott Moscow, OD
Roswell Eye Clinic, Roswell, Ga.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary



To overcome [their] fear of contact lenses, we perform a full exam for willing staff, with or without a contact lens evaluation at no charge. During the exam, we strongly encourage a contact lens demo for staff members who did not want a full contact lens evaluation, including those with no prescription."



EVERYONE PLAYS A ROLE IN RETENTION (CONT'D)

TAKING A FULL TEAM APPROACH

Every organ in your body helps to keep you alive, and every team member can change how a patient approaches trying or buying contact lenses in your office.

We train our staff to always ask patients at check-in whether they wear contact lenses. If they say no, then we ask if they are interested in wearing contact lenses. Just this one simple check-in question has increased the interest in patients who have never even considered contact lenses in the past.

Some patients will say, "Well I don't think I'm a candidate for contacts." My staff knows to respond, "You would be surprised what is available! I will have the doctor discuss it with you."

My technicians will pre-test the patients and will type in—as their chief complaint—that they are interested in discussing contact lenses. The doctors will then thoroughly explain the options, including multifocals for presbyopes (most of whom don't know these are an option). If they didn't show interest at check-in, I will also ask them if they have ever considered contact lenses.

The technicians are extremely patient with training people how to insert and remove lenses, which is critical! You want to provide the best possible first experience and don't want a grumpy teacher. Our opticians make purchase easy by offering a year's supply of contact lenses with home shipping. If patients do not buy that day, they are sent a link to make it easier to order from us.

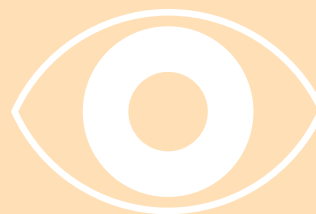
Every team member plays a role in our success and patients often compliment how we handle every step of the process.



Sabrina Gaan, OD
Eyes on Plainville, Plainville, Mass.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

“

We train our staff to always ask patients at check-in whether they wear contact lenses. If they say no, then we ask if they are interested in wearing contact lenses.”



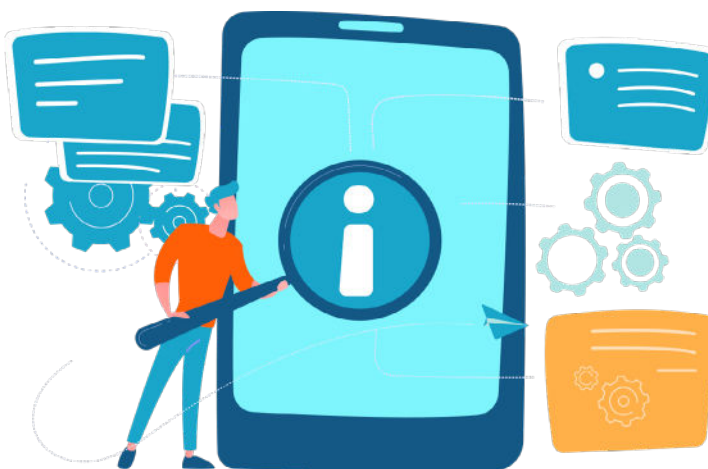
INFORMATION PLEASE

Much like the prospective wearers that CLI queried in its recent Beyond Vision report, current contact lens patients seek information about wear from a broad spectrum of sources.

Eye doctors (NW: 38%, LTW: 32%), **optical staff** (NW: 27%, LTW: 12%), and **opticians** (NW: 24%, LTW: 22%) **rank in the top five**, with **administrative staff** (NW: 21%, LTW: 10%) and **exam staff** (NW: 18%, LTW: 12%) **landing in the top 10** (of 19 possibilities presented).

New wearers express their **thirst for knowledge**, rating every category higher than long-term wearers. This was particularly apparent with their **reliance on friends and family** as a source of information, ranking second among all options, and 23 points higher compared to veteran wearers (NW: 34%, LTW: 11%).

Take note that **32% of the long-term group** said it had not looked to any source for contact lens information over the past year. This likely reflects their self-assurance about wear, but also reinforces the need for practice teams to proactively provide ongoing wear and care education and updates on relevant advancements.



It's also important to acknowledge the role of digital media. Many in the eye care community look to internet-centric resources to educate patients. These can prove valuable, reaching wearers where they consume other types of information. However, **be cautious of over-reliance**. According to wearers, many of the most popular digital mediums have modest to minimal roles, including social media influencers (NW: 20%, LTW: 4%), social media posts (NW: 15%, LTW: 5%), advertising (NW: 14%, LTW: 8%), and news stories (NW: 12%, LTW: 5%).

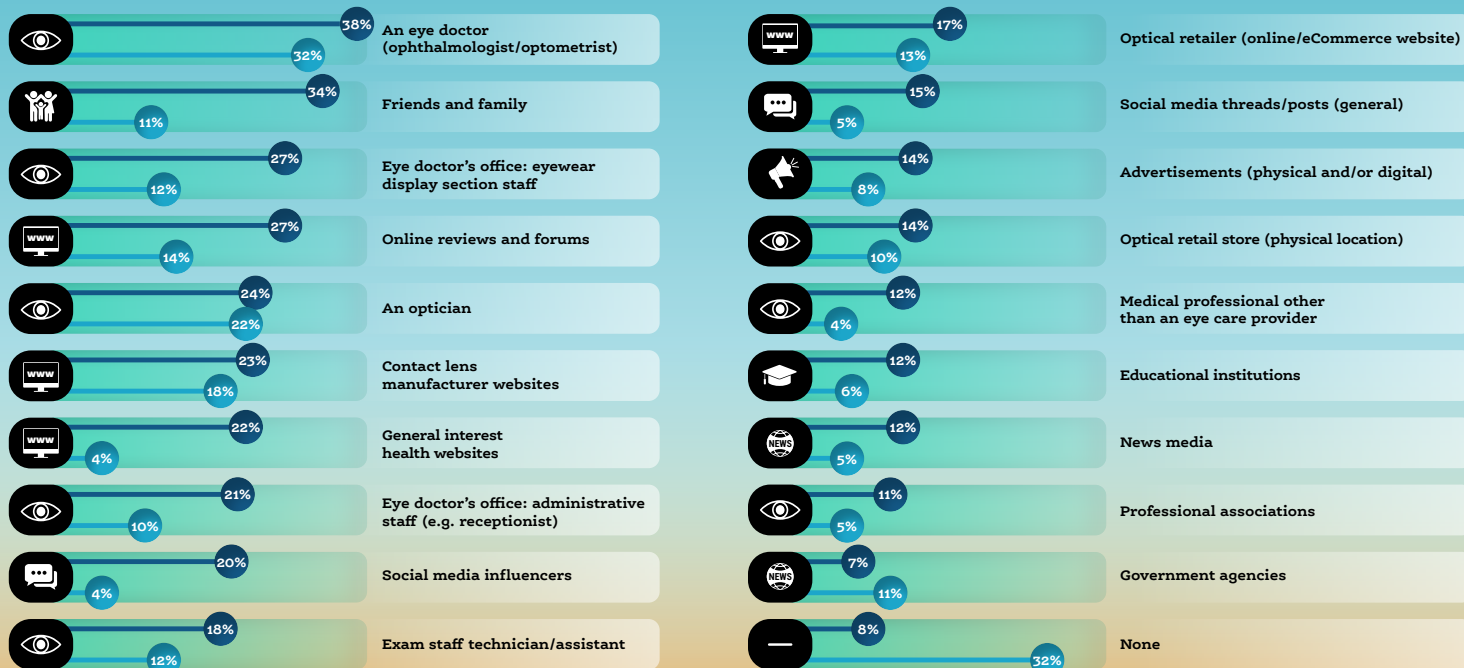
Contact Lens Information Sources

New Wearers (<2 Years)

Long-Term Wearers (≥2 Years)

New wearers have a **GREATER APPETITE FOR CONTACT LENS INFORMATION** across a range of sources.

While many seek out professionals in the eye care community, **THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDS/FAMILY AND ONLINE SOURCES** should not be underestimated.



COMMERCE CONSIDERATIONS

Channel Preference

Since early 2022, quarterly research from The Vision Council has found that **slightly more than one in three U.S. consumers buy their contact lenses online**, with the most recent data holding true to that trend at 33% (*Consumer inSights Q2 2024*).

CLI sought to probe within current wearers to identify their channel preferences and the impact of relationships on their choices.

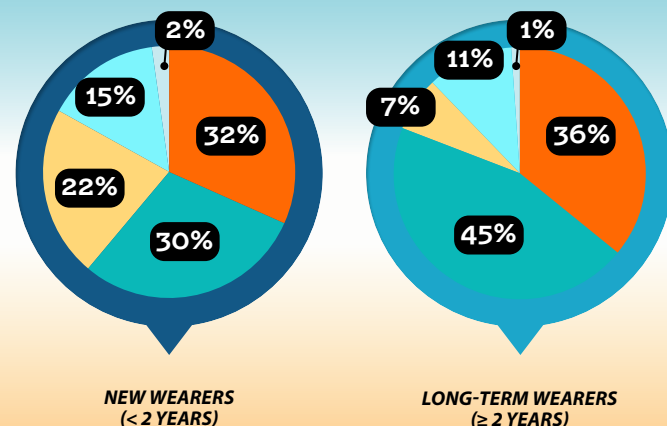
Similar to The Vision Council, the latest CLI data indicates that approximately **a third of wearers purchase their contact lenses from online retailers not affiliated with their eye doctor** (NW: 32%, LTW: 36%), with a smaller segment heading to **unaffiliated retail stores** (NW: 15%, LTW: 11%).

In-office purchase continues to be the primary channel for long-term wearers (45%), with a smaller number of veterans buying from their practice's web page or app (7%). And while a sizable number of new wearers also purchase in the office (30%), they are much more likely to order from the practice digital site than the long-term group (NW: 22%, 15 points higher compared to LTW).

The Power of Good Relationships

With wearers empowered to buy from the source of their choosing, can practice team behaviors affect their decision? The answer is a resounding yes. **More than half of all patients shared that having a good relationship with their eye doctor and exam staff had significant or considerable influence on their election to purchase contact lenses directly from them.** The opinions of new wearers were even more shaped by the relationship (NW: 77%, LTW: 60%).

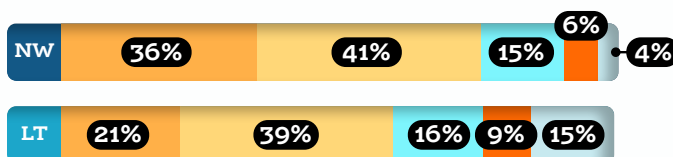
MOST FREQUENT PURCHASE CHANNELS



- Online retailer not affiliated with my eye doctor
- Eye doctor's physical office
- Eye doctor's web page or app
- Retail store not affiliated with my eye doctor
- Other

U.S. adults ages 18-64 who reported wearing soft contact lenses at least once per week. New wearers n=200, long-term wearers n=201.

PRACTICE RELATIONSHIPS INFLUENCE PURCHASE CHANNEL



- New Wearers (< 2 Years)
- Long-Term Wearers (≥ 2 Years)
- Significant influence
- Considerable influence
- Moderate influence
- Slight influence
- No influence

U.S. adults ages 18-64 who reported wearing soft contact lenses at least once per week. New wearers n=200, long-term wearers n=201.

Payment & Shipping



Credit cards are the dominant form of payment (NW: 71%, LTW: 85%). New wearers were more likely to use **alternative methods** such as online funds transfers like Venmo (NW: 11%, LTW: 4%) and cash/check (NW: 7%, LTW: 7%).

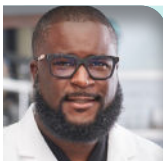


Order shipping to home or office is now the predominant delivery method (NW: 56%, LTW: 63%), followed by the wearer **personally picking them up at a practice** (NW: 36%, LTW: 34%) and **having a friend or family member pick them up** (NW: 8%, LTW: 2%).

“

Are you creating a loyal customer or a repeat customer?

Just because someone comes back every year doesn't mean they're loyal. A repeat customer may choose a different practice if I stop taking their insurance or delay an appointment by 10 minutes. A loyal customer has passed up opportunities to go somewhere else. **Intentionally create a business, a client base, and a fan base built on real relationships that breed and bring about loyalty.”**



Adam Ramsey, OD
Socialite Vision, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.
2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary



COMBINING CONTACT LENS AND GLASSES WEAR

CLI's in-depth report on people who prefer both contact lenses and glasses (*Double Duty, Spring 2023*) examined multiple facets of this population, as well as among glasses-only and contact lens-only patients—unfulfilled demands, situational wear, demographics and more. Building on that work, CLI more recently explored how dual wear was perceived by new and long-term contact lens users.

The more recently fit group tends to not only **split wearing time during an average week between glasses (51%) and contact lenses (49%)**, but also has a much more evenly split distribution for how many days per week they use contact lenses.

In comparison, **long-term wearers use their contact lenses the vast majority of the week: 88% of the time**, compared to glasses. Nearly nine of 10 patients in this group (88%) wear their contact lenses every day, while only 17% also wear glasses daily—another outsized indication of the reliance on and satisfaction for contact lenses once patients have found success.

And while CLI's data from early 2023 showed that dual wear conversations were largely absent from practices, the tide may be turning. An encouraging **69% of new wearers** said that their doctor or staff engaged in a discussion about alternating wear, with **35% of long-term wearers** reporting the same.

Those conversations can impact patient satisfaction and retention, and may lead to practice management gains through increased optical revenue. Among new wearers, **60% said talking about dual wear** with the practice team was highly or somewhat likely to influence continued contact lens wear.



While CLI's data from early 2023 showed that dual wear conversations were largely absent from practices, the tide may be turning."

Dual Wear (Contact Lens & Glasses) Preference and Impact

New contact lens wearers are **MORE LIKELY TO ALTERNATE WITH GLASSES** for their vision correction—and **DISCUSSING DUAL WEAR** with their eye doctor or exam staff increases their likelihood of continued contact lens use.

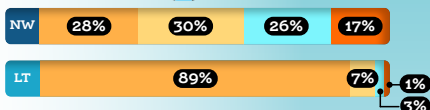


New Wearers
(<2 Years)

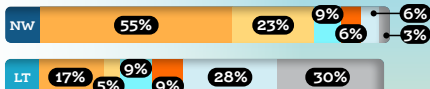
Long-Term Wearers
(≥ 2 Years)

FREQUENCY OF USE

CONTACT LENSES



GLASSES



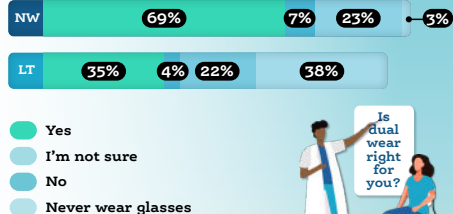
Every day
4-6 days per week
2-3 days per week
At least once a week
Less than once a week
Never

IMPACT OF DUAL WEAR DISCUSSIONS



Highly likely to keep wearing my contacts
Somewhat likely to keep wearing my contacts
No change to my likelihood of wearing my contacts
Haven't talked to doctor/staff about alternating

DISCUSSED DUAL WEAR WITH DOCTOR/STAFF

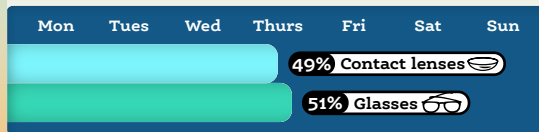


Yes
I'm not sure
No
Never wear glasses

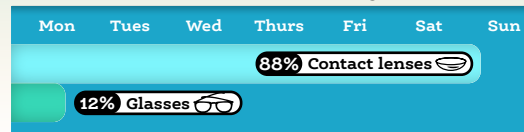


WEEKLY TOTAL WEAR PERCENTAGE

New Wearers



Long-Term Wearers



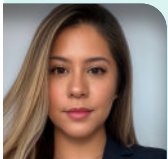
COMBINING CONTACT LENS AND GLASSES WEAR (CONT'D)

DUAL WEAR FOR PATIENT & PRACTICE SUCCESS

The conversation around dual wear of contact lenses and glasses can significantly boost both patient satisfaction and practice profitability. **From a patient satisfaction standpoint, dual wear offers flexibility.** For example, patients might prefer glasses for computer work to reduce eye strain, while contact lenses are ideal for sports or social events. This versatility enhances the patient experience, making them feel better equipped to manage different aspects of their daily lives. Furthermore, addressing potential issues like dry eye or discomfort from over-wearing contacts can build trust, as patients see us prioritizing their long-term eye health.

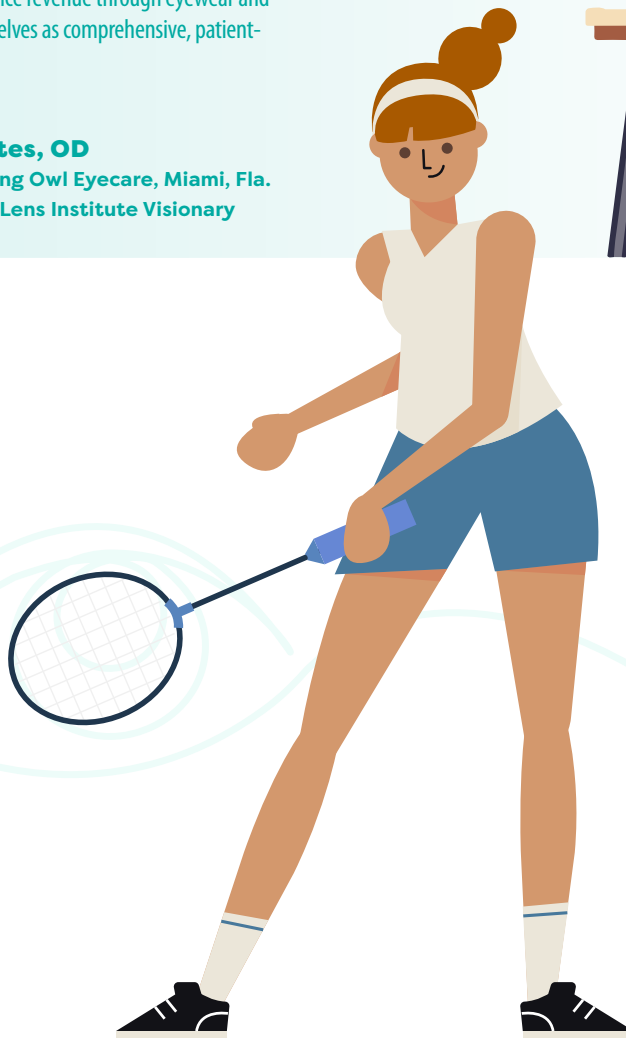
From a **financial perspective**, encouraging patients to adopt both options increases the overall revenue per patient. Contact lenses alone require regular check-ups, lens supplies, and renewals, while glasses serve as a secondary purchase, offering additional opportunities for sales. By discussing the advantages of owning both, such as the **convenience of switching** between contacts and glasses **based on activities or comfort**, we position our practice as meeting a broader range of visual and lifestyle needs.

By integrating this conversation into routine appointments, we not only enhance patient care but also drive incremental practice revenue through eyewear and contact lens sales, all while positioning ourselves as comprehensive, patient-focused providers.



Angelica Cifuentes, OD
Bye Dry Eyes / Blinking Owl Eyecare, Miami, Fla.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

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TIME & TRUST

Time is growing ever more precious in people's personal and professional lives. Eye care is no different, with common pressure to be as efficient as possible while also optimizing patient and practice outcomes.

When it comes to building rapport with contact lens patients, does time matter? Data indicate it does, yet in a way that is largely realistic and manageable.

When asked if more time spent with their eye doctor and/or exam staff elevated trust in their recommendations, **74% of new wearers** and **57% of long-term wearers** agreed it did.

However, that does not require extending appointments and reducing throughput. The median definition of 'adequate' total exam length time—including doctors and exam staff—was **16-20 minutes** (NW: 41%, LTW: 39%). Among both wearer segments, 92% deemed 30 minutes or less to be adequate.

"A well-placed conversation about wearing contacts or new contact lens technologies can make a world of difference in



The median definition of 'adequate' total exam length time was 16-20 minutes."

attracting and retaining patients," said Dr. Compton. "There is more than enough room within the 'adequate' 16-20-minute exam to have a contact lens discussion."

"Even if the doctor has limited availability, then the optician should use the benefit of having more time with the patient to make sure that they're well informed, have all their questions answered, and they feel like they've been taken care of," added Mr. Bruce.

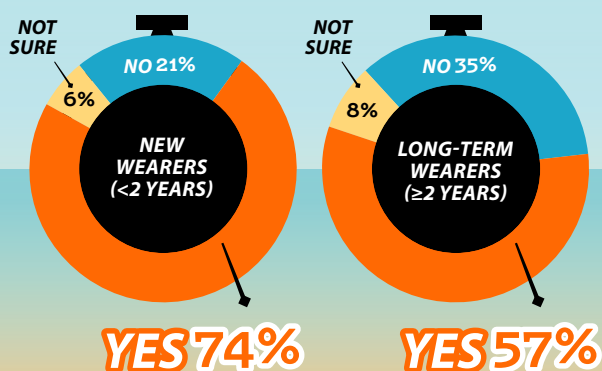
Remember that new wearers especially saw the entire practice team as valuable sources of contact lens information, likely inferring that their definition of appointment time extends beyond the exam lane to intake and the optical, too—well within many practices' standards.

More Patient Time = Elevated Trust

A majority of contact lens wearers believe that **MORE TIME** spent with their eye doctor and exam staff **INCREASES TRUST** in their recommendations—a belief even more important among new wearers. The median opinion of what constituted **"ADEQUATE" TIME IS 16-20 MINUTES.**

Impact of Time with Doctor & Exam Staff

DOES A GREATER AMOUNT OF TIME your eye doctor and/or exam staff spend with you during an appointment INFLUENCE YOUR TRUST in their recommendations?

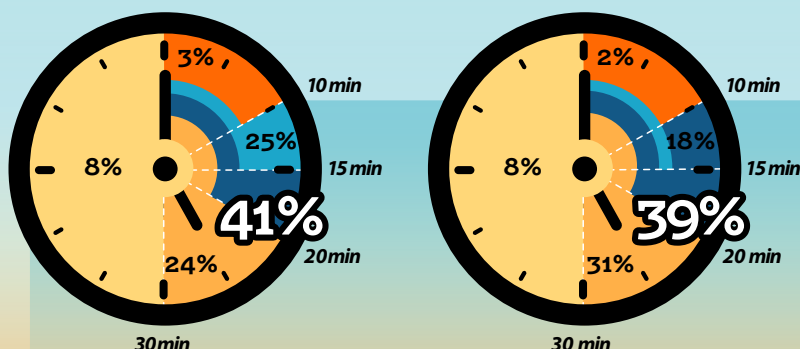


Perceived 'Adequate' Exam Time

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU BELIEVE IS ADEQUATE for your eye doctor and exam staff (in total) to spend with you during a typical appointment?

NEW WEARERS (<2 YEARS)

LONG-TERM WEARERS (≥2 YEARS)

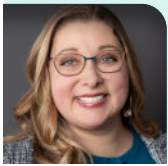


SHORT CONVERSATIONS BUILD A LIFETIME OF TRUST

Nothing is more precious than the trust that our patients put in us to take the best possible care of their vision and eye health. We are all busy, yet taking just a few extra minutes during the exam can help build that trust.

When I am with my patients, I take every opportunity to educate them about what I am doing during the exam, what I am seeing, and explaining how that affects their eye health. For example, with contact lens wearers, **I explain that I am checking the health of their eyes to ensure the lenses are fitting properly and comfortably.** I also take a few minutes to remind them how to care for their contact lenses and ensure they are wearing their lenses properly. Lastly, **I ask the patient if they have any questions** about what we discussed.

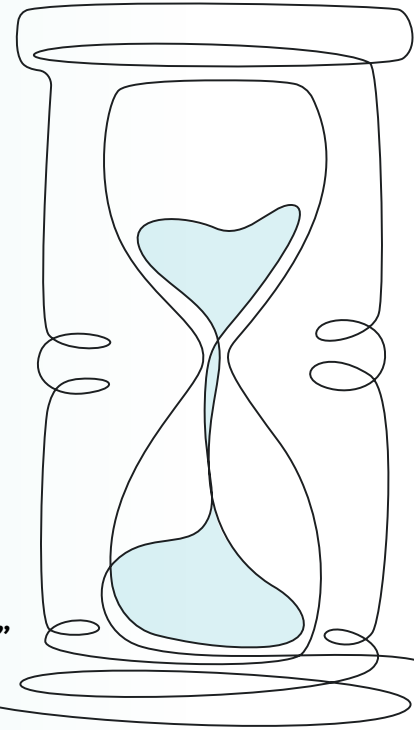
Our patients have busy lives too, so these conversations don't need to take long. They will appreciate the extra time you take to provide education and address their needs and concerns. Building this trust will have patients coming back year after year because they know you will give them exceptional care.



Lisa Hornick, OD, MBA, FAAO
Stanford Ranch Optometry, Rocklin, Calif.
2023-2024 Contact Lens Institute Visionary

“

Our patients have busy lives, too, so these conversations don't need to take long. They will appreciate the extra time you take to provide education and address their needs and concerns.”





Thank you for reading *Disrupting the Dropout Dilemma: Practical Steps to Keep Patients in Contact Lenses* and sharing it with your teams and colleagues. Please visit ContactLensInstitute.org to access our prior studies and download additional practice-building tools at no charge.

The contact lens market continues to experience strong demand, driven by new advances from manufacturers, changing consumer habits and expectations, and rising prescribing confidence and enthusiasm by the eye care community. This momentum can only grow stronger by helping new and long-term contact lens patients remain informed and excited about how continued wear optimizes their vision and their lives.

Contact Lens Institute™

Washington, D.C. • cli@contactlensinstitute.org
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