

# ASK THE DOCTOR



**(NAPSA)—Dear Dr. Hansen: I lead a very active lifestyle and am constantly outdoors. How do I best take care of my eyes during outdoor activities?**

Protect your eyes from the environment, not just the sun. There's a high risk of injury with many outdoor sporting activities. It's paramount that you have effective sunglasses to protect eyes from flying objects and from ultraviolet (UV)



**Dr. Dave Hansen**


rays. Brand names and high price tags do not indicate the quality of the lens. You should go to your eye care practitioner for recommendations for a pair that protects the entire eye.

Babies and infants in strollers should wear eye protection as well. People who start protecting their eyes at a young age are less likely to have problems later in life.

Keep rewetting products with you at all times. Keeping your eyes lubricated helps keep them free of certain pathogens. You should never rinse your contact lenses with water. Use eyedrops to lubricate and rewet contact lenses. The Complete Revitalize Active Pack for soft lenses contains all you need to keep eyes comfortable and protected while you're on the go—it contains a

travel-size Complete Moisture-PLUS Multi-Purpose Solution and Blink-N-Clean Lens rewetting drops.

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***The best way to protect your eyes while swimming is to remove your contact lenses and wear good athletic goggles.*** 

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**Dear Dr. Hansen: Can I swim while wearing contact lenses?**

No. All water (tap water, pools, lakes, the ocean, etc.) contains all sorts of contamination. Hot tubs are the worst. It doesn't matter if you open your eyes briefly—you could get an infection in a matter of a few seconds. The best way to protect your eyes while swimming is to remove your contact lenses and wear good athletic goggles.

**Dear Dr. Hansen: What should I look for in a good pair of sunglasses?**

Sunglasses provide protection from UV rays in sunlight. Exposed UV light may damage the cornea and retina; however, good sun lenses can reduce the harmful UV rays. You can see on the sunglasses' label its level of protection from UVA and UVB rays. Poorly made sunglasses may also cause visual distortion.

Unfortunately, distortion-free lenses cannot be checked over the counter. This distortion results in a reduction of optical clarity and may cause headaches. Buying the right pair of sunglasses gives you maximum protection, so visit your eye care practitioner for recommendations of a good pair.

**Dear Dr. Hansen: How can I prevent dry eye?**

Dry eye syndrome is very common. It causes a variety of symptoms, from irritation, burning and itching, to blurred vision. Though dry eyes cannot be cured, there are a number of steps that can be taken to treat them. Eat a proper, healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables and get good exercise. Take breaks from staring at your computer screen every 30 minutes. Blink at intervals of three to five seconds to move tears and lubricate the eye. If you wear contact lenses, use a moisturizing lens solution for optimum comfort such as Complete MoisturePLUS Multi-Purpose Solution for soft lenses that soothes with artificial tear ingredients, which can make a difference in how your eyes feel.

*David W. Hansen, OD, FAAO, was in clinical practice, a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and is currently Director, Professional Services at Advanced Medical Optics, Inc. in Santa Ana, Calif.*