

# Pointers For Parents

## Doctors Offer Advice On How To Minimize UV Exposure To Eyes

(NAPSA)—While 85 percent of Americans recognize that ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage their eyes, only 65 percent wear sunglasses as protection, and even fewer (39 percent) make sure their children wear sunglasses.

“These gaps in vision care attitudes and behavior are of great concern, particularly when it comes to children,” says Christine W. Sindt, OD, FAAO, associate professor of clinical ophthalmology, University of Iowa.

It is estimated that 80 percent of lifetime exposure to UV occurs by age 18 and that children’s annual dose of UV radiation is three times that of adults.

While most sunglasses can help block UV rays from entering through the lenses, most frame styles do not prevent rays from reaching the sides, top and bottom of the glasses. Hats with brims offer no protection from UV rays reflected up from surfaces such as pavement, sand and water.

“For those who need vision correction, a significant measure of UV protection can be achieved with a combination of UV-absorbing sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat and UV-blocking contact lenses,” adds Dr. Stephen Cohen, a Scottsdale, Arizona-based optometrist.

“Not all contact lenses offer UV protection, and of those that do, not all provide similar absorption levels,” explains Dr. Cohen. Among contact lens brands, 1•Day Acuvue Moist Brand Contact Lenses offer up to 82 percent UVA and 97 percent UVB protection, the highest levels available in a one-day contact lens at this time. On average, contact lenses without UV-blocking capability allow 90 percent of UVA radiation and 70 percent of UVB



**It is important to get maximum protection for eyes beginning in childhood.**

radiation to pass through the lenses to your eyes.

For those who favor reusable lenses, only Acuvue Advance Brand Contact Lenses and Acuvue Oasys Brand Contact Lenses carry the Seal of Acceptance for Ultraviolet Absorbing Contact Lenses from both the American Optometric Association and World Council of Optometry’s Global Commission on Ophthalmic Standards. These lenses are the only ones to offer the highest level of UV blocking available, blocking more than 90 percent of UVA rays and 99 percent of UVB rays that reach the lens at this time.

“Although UV-blocking contact lenses provide important added protection for wearers, they should always be worn in conjunction with high-quality UV-blocking sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat,” says Dr. Cohen.

For more information on the risks associated with UV exposure to the eyes and steps you can take to protect your eyes from the sun’s harmful rays, visit [www.healthywomen.org/sunandyoureyes](http://www.healthywomen.org/sunandyoureyes) to download the free resource, *Fast Facts for Your Health: The Sun and Your Eyes*.

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*Editor’s Note: Important information for contact lens wearers: ACUVUE® Brand Contact Lenses are available by prescription only for vision correction. An eye care professional will determine whether contact lenses are right for you. Although rare, serious eye problems can develop while wearing contact lenses. To help avoid these problems, follow the wear and replacement schedule and the lens-care instructions provided by your eye doctor. Do not wear contact lenses if you have an eye infection, or experience eye discomfort, excessive tearing, vision changes, redness or other eye problems. If one of these conditions occurs, contact your eye doctor immediately. For more information on proper wear, care and safety, talk to your eye care professional and ask for a Patient Instruction Guide, call (800) 843-2020 or visit [www.acuvue.com](http://www.acuvue.com).*

ACUVUE® Brand Contact Lenses with UV blocking help protect against transmission of harmful UV radiation to the cornea and into the eye.

**WARNING:** UV-absorbing contact lenses are NOT substitutes for protective UV-absorbing eyewear such as UV-absorbing goggles or sunglasses because they do not completely cover the eye and surrounding area. You should continue to use UV-absorbing eyewear as directed. **NOTE:** Long term exposure to UV radiation is one of the risk factors associated with cataracts. Exposure is based on a number of factors such as environmental conditions (altitude, geography, cloud cover) and personal factors (extent and nature of outdoor activities). UV-blocking contact lenses help provide protection against harmful UV radiation. However, clinical studies have not been done to demonstrate that wearing UV-blocking contact lenses reduces the risk of developing cataracts or other eye disorders. Consult your eye care practitioner for more information.