

Contact lenses: The do's and the don'ts



by Adejoke Adenle
Reporter

and Somers optometrist clinic.

From the time of their invention in 1887 by A. E. Fick to the present date, contact lenses have proved effective and useful to many people with less than perfect eyesight. Contact lenses let people see the world with clearer vision.

Contact lenses which are used daily must be cleaned every night. To clean them properly, they must be disinfected and cleaned enzymatically. Extended disposables can be used for a week and then must be thrown away. However, even with extended lenses, after the sixth day, they must be thoroughly cleaned in appropriate solution.

Contact lenses are made with glass or plastic with a suitable fluid underneath them. In 1950, when smaller lenses were invented, the suitable fluid became tears.

Living in a dusty and dry climate does not affect the cleaning of contact lenses. However, exceptions are placed on people who are easily allergic to dust. If this is the case, it is up to the optometrist to prescribe the number of times the lenses should be cleaned.

For college students who are constantly on the go, contact lenses prove to be life-savers. They are easy to manage and carry around, and unlike glasses, they eliminate the constant worry of fingerprint smudges. They are always in the eyes and cleaning is required only at night when they are taken off.

The best thing to do in this type of climate is to constantly wet the lenses with eye drops. This will prevent dryness from occurring.

Cleaning and taking care of contact lenses can be tedious, especially if one gets home late at night and feels tired. However, they must be removed at night and disinfected to avoid infection. Cleaning is a very essential part of owning contact lenses.

Even though contact lenses prove to be very advantageous, there are a few disadvantages to owning contact lenses. Contact lenses are not effective for all eye problems. In addition, they are expensive and some people find difficulty in learning to use them.

"The major thing about contact lenses is cleaning. You must also be very careful with them," stressed an optician at the Kroll

vision correction. If these problems are absent, contact lenses may prove to be the best innovation in the area of vision correction.

Measles epidemic continues nationwide

by Kara Kelley
Staff Reporter

Last spring's measles epidemic, which disrupted commencement exercises and classes, is returning.

Indiana's Vincennes University is the first to report an outbreak this school year, although nationwide, 20,115 cases have been reported by the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

As of Sept. 30, there were 201 confirmed cases of measles in Clark County. A few were students from UNLV according to June Constantino, epidemiology nurse at the Clark County Health District.

Measles is an acute, highly communicable viral disease that causes death in one of every 1,000 reported cases. Known as a common childhood disease,

measles can also be dangerous for pregnant women and adults.

"It is an especially dangerous disease for adults, because adults tend to develop a more severe reaction and have side effects such as pneumonia and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain tissue)," said Lori Winchell, director of UNLV's Student Health Center.

"People who think they are protected, are not protected," Winchell said.

Those individuals who were born in 1957 or later should be immunized again, because many doctors changed to a less effective vaccine in the late 1950's.

According to the American College Health Association, the year 1957 is important because most people born before that year were already exposed to measles outbreaks and are now immune.

Experts are now saying that in order to ensure long-term protection, the first measles shot at 15 months should be followed by a second vaccination before junior high.

Hundreds of schools have followed the CDC's recommendation that colleges should require documentation of two doses of the measles vaccine before registering for classes. Winchell said UNLV is also looking into a voluntary pre-immunization requirement under the direction of Liz Baldizan. Baldizan was unable to be reached for comment.

The CDC is recommending a MMR immunization (Measles-Mumps-Rubella), which can be obtained for \$5 at UNLV's Student Health Center.

College students experience sleep disorders

by Shawn Black Snider
Staff Reporter

The American Sleep Disorders Association (ASDA) reports that the average college age student of 18 to 25 years old is in the highest percentage group of the 100 million Americans who regularly fail to get a good night's sleep.

"Sleep is a very active state. It is important that people realize this and heed the warning signs their body may be giving them prior, during and upon awakening from sleep," said Greg Mader, an administrator at the ASDA.

Dory Markling, administrator of the newly-opened Sleep Disorders Center, a testing and diagnostic sleep laboratory, said that insomnia is the most common complaint they receive. She added that although some of it is based on behavioral or psychological problems, much can be traced to other disorders, the leading one being sleep apnea.

Apnea causes a person to stop breathing from 10 to 90 second intervals and on an average of three to 500 times a night. Its most common symptoms are heavy snoring and excessive daytime sleepiness.

"An 18 to 25 year old should not be snoring," Markling said. "There is probably a medical reason for it and it should be looked into."

Possible treatments might

include removal of tonsils and adenoids or the use of a breathing aid known as continuous positive air pressure.

The American Journal of Nursing's study on sleep cycles stressed the consequences of sleep disturbances. The report showed that sleep occurs in five stages, each serving a distinct purpose in relation to our health, both physical and mental.

The fifth stage, known as REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, is the stage in which we dream. The importance of this stage is reflected in our learning, memory and psychological adaptations.

Deprivation of this stage can cause apathy, lack of alertness, poor judgement and severe depression.

What all this amounts to, said Markling, is realizing the importance of sleep to our waking hours.

"Sleep studies and sleep laboratories are relatively new. We do extensive testing here at our center and then work with a patient's family doctor regarding diagnosis and treatment. We are also involved with various support groups that might be of assistance to someone with special needs," Markling said.

It is not always necessary to have expensive sleep studies done, however. According to Markling, what is necessary is to become better educated about sleep and what it may be trying to tell us about physical and psychological waking health.

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