

## **What is the difference between a contact lens exam and a routine eye exam?**

A routine eye exam is not the same as a contact lens exam. For contact lens wearers, a contact lens exam is necessary to ensure the lenses are fitting both eyes properly and that the health of the eyes is not harmed by the contact lenses.

### **Comprehensive Eye Exam**

A comprehensive eye exam is an important part of caring for your overall health whether you need vision correction or not. By looking into your eyes, your doctor can check for signs of serious health conditions like hypertension and diabetes.

During a comprehensive eye exam, your doctor will look for signs of glaucoma, perform tests to check your vision sharpness, determine your prescription strength, examine how your eyes work together, and check the fluid pressure in your eyes. He may also dilate your eyes to see if you have any eye conditions or signs of other serious health conditions.

### **Contact Lens Exam**

If you wear or want contacts, you need a contact lens exam in addition to a comprehensive eye exam. Your eye doctor will perform special tests during a contact lens exam to evaluate your vision with contacts. The first test will measure your eye surface to determine what size and type of contacts are best for you. Your doctor may also evaluate your tear film to make sure you have enough tears to comfortably wear contacts. He will also check to see if your eyes show signs of contact lens overwear, and make sure that the eyes are healthy enough to continue to wear contact lenses.

With the results of those tests, your eye doctor can provide a contact lens prescription that is the right fit for your eyes. An eyeglass prescription is no substitute for a contact lens exam because the two are very different. An eyeglass prescription measures for lenses that are positioned approximately 12 millimeters from your eyes; whereas a contact lens prescription measures for lenses that sit directly on the surface the eye. An improper fitting or prescription of contacts can damage the health of the eyes.

Because most insurance companies consider contact lenses to be elective many of them will not cover the contact lens eval., or only pay a portion of the fee.