

## Contact lens case care

Although many contact lens wearers are very particular in the care of their lenses, care of the contact lens case is often neglected.

The contact lens case is an important component of any contact lens care and maintenance system. However, numerous clinical studies have shown that contact lens cases can harbour bacterial growth. To understand why, it is necessary to know a little more about bacteria and something called biofilm.

How is bacterial growth possible in a contact lens case?

Scientists have discovered that bacteria can survive in a protective “slime” coating called biofilm. This coating is formed when environmental conditions are not optimal for the survival of the bacteria, for example, in a contact lens case filled with disinfecting solution.

What is biofilm and where does it come from?

A biofilm is a protective layer secreted by certain bacteria in which the bacteria become embedded and nourished and more adherent to the underlying surface. This biofilm or coating surrounds the bacterial colony and protects it from the effects of disinfection.

How does biofilm cause eye infection?

Biofilm can act as a continuous source of microbial contamination. Free floating bacterial cells released from the biofilm can float through the lens care solution and adhere to the contact lens material. If the lens is then applied to a damaged eye, infection can be the result.

What can I do to keep my contact lens case safe to use?

Here are a few simple suggestions:

# Every time you insert your [contact lenses](#) –discard the old disinfecting solution from the case and rinse the case thoroughly with hot water and leave it to air dry.

# Once a week – use a small brush (an old toothbrush works fine) and some contact lens disinfection solution to thoroughly scrub the inside and outside of the case and then rinse thoroughly with hot water and allow to air dry.

# Every 3-6 months – replace your contact lens case with a new one.

By understanding the mechanism of bacterial biofilm formation and routinely caring for and replacing your contact lens case, you can dramatically help reduce the risk of eye infection.

## About the Author

Bruce Macnaughton writes about [contact lenses discounted](#) that are sold by [Webcontacts contact lens in Australia](#)

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