

Care of the Ocular Prosthesis



*Phillip A. Danz and Associates, Inc.
Eric M. Lindsey, B.C.O.*

1728 Professional Dr.
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 485-4249

DAILY CARE ROUTINE

Proper care of your ocular prosthesis will increase your comfort and appearance. Proper care also adds life to your prosthetic eye.

Tears and mucus leave deposits on the eye, and a film develops that dulls its luster. Also, these deposits can irritate your eye socket.

Most daily accumulations can be cleaned without removing the prosthesis from its socket. Daily cleaning can be done in the shower using Johnson's Baby Shampoo. Enzymes in the shampoo break down protein that accumulates on the prosthesis and removes mucus from your eyelids and lashes.

Away from the shower and without removing it, the prosthesis can be rinsed with a sterile saline solution. It can be cleaned with moist cotton swabs or gauze, wiping gently towards the nose. Wiping away from your nose may dislodge or rotate the prosthesis.

Clean the prosthesis and lids each morning, but remove only occasionally unless there are special problems.* Removal exposes your eye socket to bacteria. However, if you have a cold, have excess secretions, or are exposed to dusty areas, you may want to remove and clean your prosthesis more frequently.

Once the prosthesis is removed for cleaning, it can take up to three days for your body's natural lubricants to coat the surface of the prosthesis with soothing secretions. During this time, you may use artificial tears, such as OASIS or Tears Again gel, or oily lubricants, such as Sil-Ophtho or Duratears, to reduce irritation caused by harsh weather, harsh working conditions, or low tear flow (dry eyes).

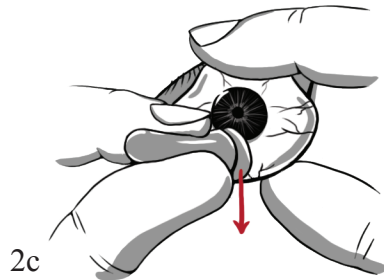
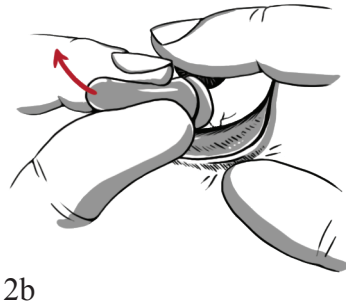
REMOVING THE EYE FOR CLEANING

Wash your hands thoroughly before removing or inserting your prosthesis

To remove the eye without a suction cup, tilt your head downward and look up. Then, press in (towards your back) and up with your index finger from the skin below the lower lid. This allows the eye to fall downward (1).



Removal with a suction cup begins as you wet the suction cup and squeeze it. Tilt your head down and spread the lid margin with your fingers (2a). Apply the suction cup to the center of the prosthesis. Pull it up and out from the lower lid (2b) and then down (2c) from the upper lid. Never try to pull the prosthesis straight out of the socket.



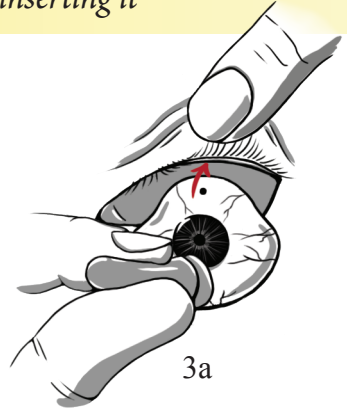
Wash the prosthesis in warm running tap water after each removal, holding it between the tip of the thumb and fingers, gently rub with

diluted baby shampoo. The prosthesis can be buffed between your fingers with a wet paper towel.

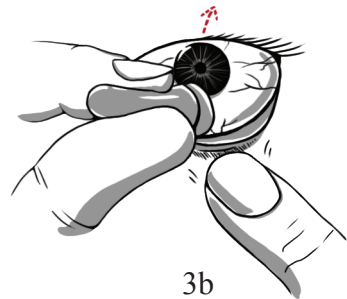
INSERTING THE EYE

Always wet the prosthesis before inserting it

Raise your upper lid. While holding the artificial eye between your thumb and index finger (or a suction cup), insert the upper portion (our prosthesis almost always has a dot on the upper portion above the iris) of the prosthesis (3a). Release the upper lid.



Then, pull down on the lower lid while pushing up on the prosthesis (3b). Finally, push the prosthesis towards the socket and remove any air that might be trapped behind the artificial eye.



CLEANING THE PROSTHESIS

Some patients can experience socket contraction if the prosthesis is left out for a period of time, even for overnight. When the prosthesis is left out of the socket for a period of time, it should be stored in a sterile saline or balanced salt solution.

Occasionally, you may want to disinfect and clean the surface of the prosthesis. It may be placed in a 3% hydrogen peroxide or a 10% povidone-iodine aqueous solution (such as Betadine). The prosthesis should be immersed in the solution for *no longer than 15 minutes*** and then rinsed thoroughly before reinsertion.

Alcohol, solvents, or other chemicals will damage the prosthesis

The use of a hard contact lens enzymatic cleaner may also be useful in dissolving accumulated protein deposits from the surface. Follow the instructions on the product.

The prosthesis should be professionally cleaned and polished every six months. Scratches and deposits accumulate over time and may not be smoothed or eliminated except by your ocularist.

See your doctor if excessive discharge and irritation persists for more than a few days after polishing.

*Special situations, such as the wearing of a scleral shell prosthesis over a sensitive eye or when there is incomplete closure of the lids upon blinking, may cause the patient to take out the prosthesis more frequently, perhaps even leaving it out at night. You will be advised of this by your doctor or ocularist.

**Acrylic materials can absorb fluid. Immersion in a disinfectant for a long period of time will cause it to be absorbed into the material causing irritation and burning.

SUMMARY

- Proper care of your prosthesis will increase the comfort, appearance, and longevity of your prosthetic eye.
- Clean the prosthesis daily without removing from the socket, while removing it only occasionally for cleaning and disinfecting.
- To remove the prosthesis, take the prosthesis out from the lower lid first, then pull it down from the upper lid. Never pull the prosthesis straight out.
- Insert the prosthesis through the upper portion first, then pull down the lower lid while pushing up the prosthesis.
- Store the prosthesis in a sterile saline or balanced salt solution if it is removed for a period of time
- The prosthesis should be professionally cleaned and polished every six months.