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Dr. Paul V. Hamel & Associates

PEARLE VISION

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Summer 2008

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Protective Eyewear

Please don't overlook the importance of safety eyewear when playing sports. Each year, hundreds of men, women, and children are injured when playing sports. To help prevent sports eye injuries, athletes should use protective athletic eyewear whether or not prescription eyewear is needed. One choice is a sports frame with prescription or non-prescription polycarbonate lenses is another choice. Baseball or softball players who are hit in or near the eye, or suffer a blow to the head, should seek immediate care at a hospital emergency room or from an eye care professional.

Astigmatism

Sometimes the cornea is irregularly shaped, causing the eye to focus an object on two different areas of the retina. This is known as astigmatism. For the cornea to bend light correctly, it should be dome-shaped, like a basketball. Astigmatic corneas are shaped more like a football. This causes a distorted view when looking at objects which are close-up and far away.

The cause of astigmatism is unknown. Astigmatism is often associated with myopia or hyperopia, and usually occurs from birth. It may be hereditary, or it may be caused by factors such as pressure on the cornea, incorrect posture, or increased use of the eyes for "near work."

Mild astigmatism usually doesn't need to be corrected. Eyeglasses, contact lenses, or refractive surgery can correct moderate to high degrees of astigmatism.



UnitedHealthcare®

And many more ...

Don't forget to
visit our website!

www.PearleVisionNorth.com

Website features:

- **NEW!! Schedule your next exam online!**
Save some time and pick an appointment that fits right into your schedule.
- **Insurance information:**
We accept most insurance plans; BCBS, Harvard, Tufts, Cigna, United, Aetna, Medicare, NHP, Mass Health, and Many More...
- **Office News:**
Get the latest information on new lens technology and latest frame styles. Learn about new exam technology & equipment.
- **Order Contact Lenses:**
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OFFER ENDS 9/27/08

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Buying Contact Lenses on the Internet: Questions and Answers

The FDA wants you to be a wise consumer if you buy contact lenses, an FDA-regulated product, on the Internet. While such purchases are often a convenient and economical way to get lenses, Internet, phone, or mail orders require consumers to exercise some caution. The following questions and answers should help you take simple precautions to make your Internet, phone or mail purchase safe and effective for you.

Q] What do I need to consider when buying contact lenses on the Internet, by phone or by mail?

A] Is my contact lens prescription current? You should always have a current, correct prescription when you order contact lenses.
If you have not had a check-up within the last year, you may have problems with your eyes that you are not aware of, or your contact lenses may not correct your vision well.
The expiration date for your prescription is currently set by your state. Massachusetts requires a one-year renewal.
Never order lenses with a prescription that has expired.

Q] Will I get in legal trouble if I buy my contact lenses on the Internet, by phone or by mail if I don't have a copy of my prescription?

A] The company is selling you a prescription device as if it were an over-the-counter device. *This is a violation of the Federal prescription device regulation.* Often, the company will say that they will check back with your doctor to confirm the prescription. However, that may not always happen. Some Internet sites will allow you to fill out a form with the ordering information about your contact lenses and ask you to fill in your doctor's name and phone number. The site may not ask for an actual copy of your prescription. Since individual states have different licensing requirements for optical dispensers, enforcement of prescription device sales has usually been left to the state in which the company selling the contact lenses is located.

Q] What harm can be done if I don't have regular check-ups with my doctor or I order lenses without a valid prescription?

A] At your check-up, your eye doctor will re-evaluate the fit of your contact lenses and observe any changes in your cornea caused by your lenses. You will benefit by having a correct, current prescription and you may avoid serious problems, especially if you wear your lenses on an extended or overnight schedule. *Though infections of the cornea are rare, severe cases can cause loss of vision and even blindness.* During regularly scheduled visits, your eye doctor looks for irregularities that, if left untreated, may lead to severe problems. These irregularities often have no symptoms and you may be totally unaware of them. Contact lens wear causes many changes to cells and tissues of the eye, and sometimes wearing contact lenses can damage the cornea (the clear window of the eye). *Even if you are currently experiencing no problems, the lenses may be causing damage to your eyes.* Regular check-ups will reduce the likelihood of damage going undetected. Contact lenses that are not properly fitted by an eye doctor might not work well, or even worse, may harm your eyes.