

Prevent Blindness Girl Scout Patch Requirements

Age Level:
C S

Materials, patches and information available from Prevent Blindness Tennessee (contact information below)



Complete 4 activities including the starred activity.

1. Have an eye care professional conduct an educational presentation to your troop.
2. Have an introductory educational program on vision. Use "Magic of Sight", "Play it Safe" or "Vision" materials (masters and videos are available at the Prevent Blindness office).
3. Eye health safety: review the fact sheets on eye safety (eye safety and cosmetic contacts, eye safety when applying make-up and Halloween safety). Have girls list other things that can affect eye health.
4. Make optical occluders (an optical occluder includes a support or handle portion and an occluding portion connected to the handle for occluding at least one eye of an individual) for Prevent Blindness Tennessee to use for vision screenings (at least 50 per person). Prevent Blindness TN will use the occluders for children screening and will give them to the children after the screening, so the more creative they are the more the children love them.
5. Make a collage on "things I enjoy because of my sight". Display your troop's collage or individual girl collages on a day set aside for sight appreciation. Leaders: reinforce the ways that girls' mobility and quality of life could change without sight.
6. Appreciate your sense of sight: with adult supervision, have girls get into pairs and blindfold one of the girls. Have the blindfolded girl experiment with taste, touch and smell. Have girls take turns being blindfolded, making sure the blindfolded person does not know what she is tasting, feeling or smelling before being blindfolded.
7. Do a program or skit on eye health and/or safety for a different group (for example: another Girl Scout Troop or your class at school).

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THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT COSMETIC CONTACTS

Cosmetic contact lenses, often called zero-power or plano lenses can make quite a fashion statement. But this particular fashion statement can have some serious health risks. The lenses have been bought without prescription at boutiques, beach shops, tattoo parlors, and other nonprofessional retail vendors. There have been many cases of teenagers who nearly lost their eyesight as a result of improper use of these lenses.

Teens seem to be the biggest fans of these lenses. They cite reasons from that they look really cool to that they want to look like their favorite rock star who wears them. However, many teens do not take necessary precautions with the lenses and that is why they develop eye problems.

Prevent Blindness America believes, along with other vision organizations, that these lenses must be classified as medical devices, under the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA had such a policy in place until April 2003, at which time they decided to reclassify cosmetic lenses as cosmetics.

Contacts are not Cosmetics

Classifying cosmetic contact lenses in the same category as eye shadow, mascara and lipstick does not make sense. While there are some risks associated with eye cosmetics, there are more health risks when you put a foreign object in your eye.

What are the risks?

Contact lenses are relatively safe, however, complications can occur. Problems such as eye pain, bacterial infections, and corneal ulcers are caused by improper use of lenses or solutions. These problems also arise when patients try to take short cuts like using lenses for a longer period of time than indicated, or not using adequate cleaning and soaking solutions.

Contact Lens Safety Tips

- Always visit a licensed eye care professional to be fitted for contact lenses.

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research.

- Always wear contact lenses under the supervision of an eye care professional.
- Always clean and disinfect contact lenses according to instructions.
- Always store contact lenses properly in a clean storage case.
- Always use water-soluble cosmetics or those labeled safe for use with contact lenses. Do not apply skin creams or moisturizers too close to the eyes.
- Never buy contact lenses without a prescription.
- Never go to sleep while wearing cosmetic lenses.
- Never wear opaque lenses if you have any problems with night vision.
- Never share or trade your contact lenses with friends.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you experience any pain, irritation, redness, blurriness or visual changes.

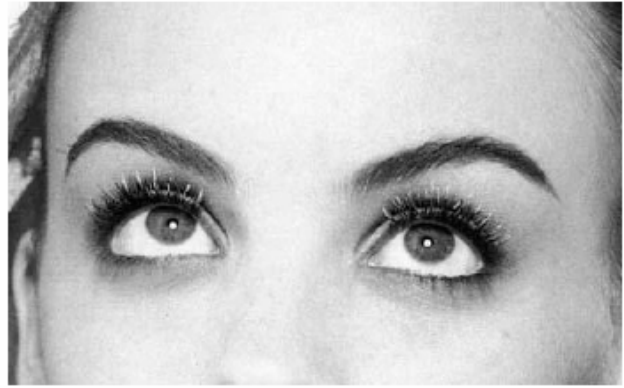
To find out more about Prevent Blindness America's public policy initiatives, visit us online at www.preventblindness.org/advocacy.



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SAFE USE OF EYE COSMETICS

Eye cosmetics are made to enhance your appearance. Improper use of eye cosmetics can lead to serious eye infections, irritations, corneal injuries, damage to contact lenses and allergies.

- Most new eye cosmetics bought from well-known national brand companies are free from bacteria that can cause eye infections.
- Most contain preservatives that prevent the growth of bacteria.
- Misused and improperly preserved eye makeup can cause eye infections.
- Bacteria can grow fast in a product and get into the eye. If the brush scratches the cornea, bacteria on the brush can enter the scratch.

Tips for using eye cosmetics safely

- Wash your hands before applying makeup. Some bacteria can transfer from your hands to your eyes.
- Disposable applicators are the best to use,

but keep all applicators clean and in good condition. Do not reuse old applicators.

- Cosmetics should be kept away from extreme heat and cold that can break down the preservatives, allowing bacteria to grow. Do not carry mascara in your purse or leave makeup in your car.
- Avoid “natural” and “preservative-free” products. Bacteria may thrive in these products.
- Moisture promotes the growth of bacteria so do not moisten cosmetics with water or saliva.
- Do not share your makeup with others or use someone else’s makeup.
- Do not switch mascara brushes from one vial to another.
- Never apply makeup while driving or riding in a moving vehicle.
- To reduce the chance of allergic reaction, use cosmetics labeled “fragrance-free,” “hypo-allergenic” or “for sensitive skin.”
- Always remove makeup every night. Never sleep with eye makeup on.
- Never separate lashes with a pin, toothpick or other pointed object.

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Special Information for Contact Lens Wearers

Contact lens wearers must take extra care when applying and removing eye cosmetics. Improperly used cosmetics can lead to lens deposits, scratches, eye irritations, allergies, dryness, injuries and infections.

Cosmetic or zero-power contacts come with the same risks as regular contacts. Never buy cosmetic contacts without a prescription! Never share your cosmetic contacts with others or use someone else's contacts.

- Use aerosol products such as hairspray or deodorant before you insert your lenses.
- Insert lenses before applying makeup and remove them before taking makeup off.
- Oily eye makeup remover can cause a cloudy buildup on lenses.
- Use water-soluble cosmetics or those that are labeled safe for use with contact lenses.
- Use pressed powder eye shadows. Frosted and glittery eye shadows contain particles that can be harmful if they get into your eye.
- Use an eye shadow base. It can help shadow stay in place and out of your eyes.
- Avoid dislodging your contacts by applying makeup with a light touch.
- Do not apply skin creams, moisturizers or other products too closely to the eyes.
- Avoid waterproof mascara and eye makeup containing nylon or rayon fibers.

These can flake off, get caught under the contact lens and scratch the cornea.

- Use pressed face powder instead of loose powder. Remove excess powder from your eyelids and eyelashes.
- Eyeliner applied to the inner eyelid can clog tiny oil glands, which can lead to an irritation.

What to do if you experience a problem

- Report persistent, severe pain to a doctor right away.
- If a mild irritation persists or worsens after you've stopped using the makeup, see a doctor right away.
- Do not apply makeup to broken or irritated skin. If you develop an eye infection, discard the makeup right away and stop using all eye makeup until the infection is gone.



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TRICK-OR-TREAT—TIPS FOR MAKING HALLOWEEN SAFE

Halloween should be a fun time that your child remembers for years to come. Every year, there are several hundred eye injuries related to costumes and masks treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. There are many things you can do to ensure your child enjoys a safe Halloween and prevent a night of treats from turning into a night of tragedy.

Costumes, Safety

- ✎ Avoid costumes with masks, wigs, floppy hats or eye patches that block vision.
- ✎ Tie hats and scarves securely so they don't slip over children's eyes.
- ✎ Avoid costumes that drag on the ground to prevent tripping or falling.
- ✎ Avoid pointed props such as spears, swords or wands that may harm other children's eyes.
- ✎ Wear bright, reflective clothing or decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape/patches.
- ✎ Carry a bright flashlight to improve visibility.
- ✎ Do not ride a bike/scooter/skateboard or roller blade while wearing a costume.
- ✎ Obey all traffic signals—pedestrian and driver.
- ✎ Younger children should go with an adult while trick-or-treating around the neighborhood. Older children should trick-or-treat in groups.
- ✎ Use common sense. Never dart out between parked cars or hidden corners such as alleys. Avoid streets under construction. Don't trick-or-treat in busy commercial areas or where there is heavy traffic.

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- ☞ Go trick-or-treating in daylight, as it is safer than going after dark.
- ☞ A safer option is to go to a Halloween party instead of trick-or-treating.

Cosmetics, Contacts Lenses

- ☞ Wear hypoallergenic make-up. Have an adult apply the make-up and remove it with cold cream instead of soap. Use make-up in place of masks.
- ☞ Cosmetic contacts that make your eyes look like cat's eyes may seem like fun, especially at Halloween. However, these lenses come with the same risks as regular contact lenses. This growing fad may seem harmless, but it is not!
- ☞ Improper use of cosmetic lenses can lead to serious eye complications. These problems include bacterial infections, swelling, eye pain, sensitivity to light, conjunctivitis (pink eye), corneal scratches, corneal ulceration, and even permanent loss of sight.
- ☞ Never buy cosmetic contacts without a prescription! Never share your cosmetic contacts with others or use someone else's contacts.
- ☞ Since this fad is popular among teens, be vigilant about older kids' appearance before letting them leave the house.

If they are wearing these contacts, ask where they got them.

Treats

- ☞ Inspect all trick-or-treat items for signs of tampering before allowing children to eat them.
- ☞ Carefully inspect any toys or novelty items received by kids age 3 and younger. These may pose a choking hazard. Avoid giving young kids lolly pops as the sticks can cause eye injuries.

Decorations

- ☞ Be sure your lawn, steps, porch and front door are well lit and free from obstacles.
- ☞ Keep candles and jack-o'-lanterns away from steps and porches outside, as costumes could brush against them and ignite. Inside, keep them away from curtains and other decorations to avoid causing a fire.



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Directions for Making an Occluder:

- 1.) Make a shape large enough to cover the eye with paper that blocks out all light. (It can be any shape and any color (even white) that you want as long as it is at least 2 in. x 2 in. You can make circles, hearts, ovals, etc. Don't be afraid to be creative! Just make sure that the shape is not too big or too small or that it does not have holes in it.)

- 2.) Next you can decorate the paper any way that you want! You can draw on it; add stickers, glitter or sequins; or add anything else that you want! (Just make sure that you do not use anything that could poke a child's eye out or that a young child might swallow.)

- 3.) The final step is to glue or tape a holder onto the paper. You can use a popsicle stick, a straw, an unsharpened pencil or anything that you see fit. You want to make sure that you glue the stick to the outside of the paper and not to the side that will be against the eye. (DO NOT use anything sharp as a holder and DO NOT staple the stick to the paper! Either could poke a child's eye out!!)

Keep in mind that the children who use the occluders that you make will get to keep them. Ultimately it is a gift for each child! Be creative and have fun!!