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DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY SUPPORT AMO'S VOLUNTARY SOLUTION RECALL, URGE CONTACT LENS WEARERS TO DISCONTINUE USE

AOA Advising Contact Lens Wearers to Take Proper Precautions as Investigation Continues

ST. LOUIS, MO – MAY 29, 2007 – Following Advanced Medical Optics' voluntary recall on Friday of its Complete® MoisturePlus™ brand contact lens solution, doctors of optometry from the American Optometric Association's (AOA) Contact Lens and Cornea Section concur with the company's decision to remove the product nationwide.

Although a cause has not been officially determined, health officials from the federal government are investigating reports that *Acanthamoeba* keratitis, a corneal bacterial infection, has been potentially linked to the Complete® MoisturePlus™ brand contact lens solution.

"Patients should immediately discontinue using Complete® MoisturePlus™ until further notice and should continue to watch for additional information from the FDA and CDC as the investigation continues," said Jack Schaeffer, O.D., chair of the Contact Lens and Cornea Section of the AOA. "This is a serious infection that can cause permanent loss of sight. It is crucial that the public and eye care professionals are aware and remain vigilant to quickly diagnose and initiate treatment of this serious eye infection."

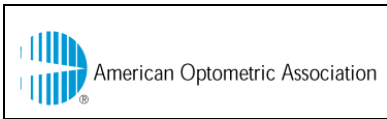
According to the AOA *Acanthamoeba* are microscopic amoeba commonly found in the environment, which rarely cause infections. When infection does occur, however, it can be extremely serious and can threaten a person's vision. Recently, there have been reports of increasing incidences of *Acanthamoeba* keratitis. Co-infection with a bacterial keratitis is common both in contact lens cases and on the cornea, which can complicate prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the infection. Proper contact lens hygiene and compliance can prevent *Acanthamoeba* keratitis.

"Contact lenses are among the safest forms of vision correction; however, lenses and lens care products are medical devices that are regulated by the FDA," said Dr. Jack Schaeffer, chair of the AOA's Contact Lens and Cornea Section. "Patients can and should take an active role in protecting themselves from eye infections by carefully following their optometrist's instructions regarding care of contact lenses."

AOA doctors of optometry are taking an active role in reporting their cases to the CDC and the FDA, where all eye doctors are strongly urged to report diagnosed cases of *Acanthamoeba* keratitis. As of May 29, 2007, 138 cases of suspected *Acanthamoeba* keratitis are under investigation by the CDC and public health authorities around the United States. Federal and state health officials have interviewed 46 of those patients. Of the 39 who wore soft contact lenses, 21 reported using the Complete® MoisturePlus™ brand manufactured by Advanced Medical Optics.

"This is a great concern to optometrists across the country," said Dr. Schaeffer. "We are urging Americans to discontinue use of Complete® MoisturePlus™ immediately and switch to an alternative product." Patients should contact their optometrist if they are in doubt as to what an acceptable alternative product would be.

As consumers look to select a new solution, doctors of optometry are educating consumers about the differences between lens care products. According to the AOA Contact Lens and Cornea Section,



most solutions are approved for use without rubbing; however, optometrists are recommending at this time that patients rub their lenses to enhance cleaning for additional safety.

In addition, regardless of which cleaning/disinfecting solution consumers use, contact lens wearers should take extra precautions with lens hygiene habits. According to the AOA, clean and safe handling of contact lenses is one of the most important measures Americans can take to protect their sight.

Recommendations for Contact Lens Wearers from the American Optometric Association

1. Always wash your hands before handling contact lenses.
2. Carefully and regularly clean contact lenses, as directed by your optometrist. If recommended, rub the contact lenses with fingers and rinse thoroughly before soaking lenses overnight in sufficient multi-purpose solution to completely cover the lens.
3. Store lenses in the proper lens storage case and replace the case at a minimum of every three months. Clean the case after each use, and keep it open and dry between cleanings.
4. Use only products recommended by your optometrist to clean and disinfect your lenses. Saline solution and rewetting drops are not designed to disinfect lenses.
5. Only fresh solution should be used to clean and store contact lenses. Never re-use old solution. Contact lens solution must be changed according to the manufacturer's recommendations, even if the lenses are not used daily.
6. Always follow the recommended contact lens replacement schedule prescribed by your optometrist.
7. Remove contact lenses before swimming or entering a hot tub.
8. See your optometrist for your regularly scheduled contact lens and eye examination.

It is important that contact lens users seek medical attention immediately if they notice changes to their eyes or vision.

Key Symptoms of *Acanthamoeba* include:

- A red, (frequently) painful eye infection—especially if the patient reports that it is not improving with treatment.
- Keratitis symptoms such as foreign body sensation, tearing, light sensitivity, and blurred vision.
- Red, irritated eyes lasting for an unusually long period of time after removal of contact lenses.

In March, the CDC launched an investigation into ophthalmic *Acanthamoeba* cases in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Washington.

About the American Optometric Association (AOA):

The American Optometric Association represents more than 34,000 doctors of optometry, optometry students and paraoptometric assistants and technicians. Optometrists provide more than two-thirds of all primary eye care in the United States and serve patients in nearly 6,500 communities across the country. In 3,500 of those communities they are the only eye doctors.

American Optometric Association doctors of optometry are highly qualified, trained doctors on the frontline of eye and vision care who examine, diagnose, treat and manage diseases and disorders of the eye. In addition to providing eye and vision care, optometrists play a major role in a patient's overall health and well-being by detecting systemic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.

Prior to optometry school, optometrists undergo three to four years of undergraduate study that typically culminates in a bachelor's degree with extensive, required coursework in areas such as advanced health, science and mathematics. Optometry school consists of four years of post-graduate, doctoral study concentrating on both the eye and systemic health. In addition to their formal training, doctors of optometry must undergo annual continuing education to stay current on the latest standards of care. For more information, visit www.aoa.org.

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