

PATIENT INFORMATION

Fresnel Prisms

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Fresnel Prism and why do I need one?

Fresnel prisms are temporary prisms which are made from a light plastic that are used to relieve double vision (diplopia). They come in a range of different strengths and can be cut to the shape of your spectacle lens.

The prism works by moving the position of one of the images so that the brain will join the two images back together into single vision. Fresnel prisms are used as a temporary treatment as they can be adjusted and removed easily.

If the strength of Fresnel prism has been stable for a long period of time (usually 6 months), there may be an option to incorporate it into a new pair of glasses (incorporated prism).

How do they fit onto glasses?

The Orthoptist will have assessed your eye position and taken measurements to choose the strength of prism needed to correct your double vision. The prism will be cut to the size of one of your glasses lenses (and usually placed in front of the eye with the weaker vision). The prism has a bumpy side and a smooth side. The smooth side is fixed onto the glass of the lens with water and will remain firmly in place once completely dry.

Will it cause any problems?

The prism may cause slight blurring/distortion of your vision in the eye looking through the prism, but when both eyes are open this should be less noticeable. Sometimes you may be aware of light splitting through the prism causing a rainbow effect.

The prism will be most effective when looking straight ahead, you may still have double vision when looking in different directions. Therefore, it is best to move your head to look in different directions, rather than only moving your eyes.

Caring for the Fresnel prism

The prism is attached to the back surface of the lens, so you can clean the front of your glasses as normal. However, it is common for dust particles, grease, and make-up to gather between the grooves on the bumpy side of the prism. If your prism needs cleaning:

- 1) Leave the prism on the lens and carefully rinse with water and soap/washing liquid. You can also use a soft nailbrush or toothbrush to gently scrub the prism (in the same direction as the lines on the prism). Ensure the prism is rinsed adequately, then pat or blot dry with a soft tissue or cloth.
- 2) If the prism falls off, or you need to remove it for cleaning, it can easily be re-applied. Rinse it thoroughly, clean the glasses lens, and ensure you have the lines of the prism in the right direction. Hold the glasses under some gently running water and slide the smooth side of the prism onto the back surface of the lens. Remove the glasses from under the water, and press the prism down gently, squeezing out any air bubbles. Then pat or blot dry with a soft tissue or cloth.

Will the prism cure my double vision or stop it from getting better?

The prism is meant to relieve the double vision when worn. It should not affect your recovery. If a Fresnel prism is unsuitable, the orthoptist will discuss this with you.

Still seeing double vision with the prism on?

It is possible your condition has changed, which could suggest improvement or worsening. You may want to speak to the orthoptist as the prism strength might need some adjustment.

If you need to speak to the orthoptist, please contact:

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