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ALERT: EMORY EYE CENTER ADVISES DISPOSING OF IMPLICATED CONTACT LENS SOLUTION FOLLOWING FIVE CASES OF FUSARIUM KERATITIS

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ATLANTA— The FDA and CDC have issued an alert concerning soft contact lens-associated corneal infection. According to the report, there is an association with Bausch & Lomb's ReNu with MoistureLoc solution. The exact cause of the infection is still unknown.

Cornea specialist Doyle Stulting, MD, PhD, reports that Emory Eye Center has seen five fusarium keratitis patients, four from the last week alone, and that anyone using ReNu with MoistureLoc should dispose of the solution, the contact lens case and replace their lenses. Wearers should replace the lens case and change to either Complete Moisture Plus (AMO) or Optifree Replenish (Alcon) lens solution. If they experience any pain or redness in their eyes, they should contact their eye doctor immediately.

In rare cases corneal scarring from the infection can lead to permanent damage. Timely treatment with anti-fungal medication is key.

“Since we have seen an increase in contact lens-associated eye infections, we strongly advise contact lens wearers to check their solution and replace any ReNu with MoistureLoc immediately,” says Dr. Stulting. “If anyone is having difficulties with his or her contact lenses, he or she should see his or her eye care provider as soon as possible, who can check for signs of fusarium keratitis. This is a disease that can be treated, if diagnosed promptly,” he says.

“Soft contact lens wear is a safe method of correcting refractive errors. Most complications of contact lens wear occur when users become complacent and don't follow instructions for lens care,” he continues. “The successful user has a healthy respect for the technology and follows instructions for contact lens care.”

Michael Ward, contact lens specialist at Emory Eye Center, concurs that “contact lens wear continues to be a very safe mode of vision correction.” He strongly recommends good hygiene for contact lens wearers:

- wash hands prior to handling lenses,
- use fresh solution daily (do not “top-off”),
- rinse and air-dry the lens case daily and scald with freshly boiled water weekly (air-dry). Replace lens case every three months.

Additional information is available on these websites:

Public Health Notice: <http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/medicaldevicesafety/atp/041006-keratitis.html>

Centers for Disease Control MMWR:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5514a5.htm>

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