

# Kelly Mitchell, M.D.

## Do you recommend costume contact lenses?

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That's an easy answer. And the answer is really no contact lenses are a medical device and they should be prescribed by a physician skilled at prescribing contact lenses an optometrist or an ophthalmologist. Because not only does the contact lens have focusing power, which I think all of us recognize, like our glasses do, but because contact lenses actually ride on top right on top of the surface of your eye, they have to be custom fit for everybody's eye individually. In fact, even between the two eyes of the same person, their contact lenses may actually have a different fit, design.

## How do costume contacts differ from normal contacts?

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Wearing a contact lens for a Halloween or any type of costume that you buy at a costume store, instead of your eye doctor, you're really you're really exposing your eyes to a significant risk because those are basically curved pieces of plastic that may have the external color that allows you to appear like a zombie or maybe a cat or, or some other type of Halloween character that you'd like to you'd like to portray, but they're not made in the same careful sterile way, clean way FDA approved way that contact lenses that your optometrist or ophthalmologist will prescribe for you.

## How can costume contacts damage your eye?

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Some of the risk that I that I worry about with contact lenses. In this type these costume Halloween themed or any type of costume themed contact lens is that the way that they're made, they're not made by a medical company that's got FDA approval to make contact lenses in a safe and sterile way. They're basically taking small pieces of plastic and making them look like contact lenses. And so the inside of them are basically could be rough plastic. And if you put those on your eye, you could end up with a conjunctivitis, which is basically the fancy word for pinkeye. That conjunctivitis could be from a small trauma from the edge of the contact lens or a more serious infection. Maybe a little bacteria was on the edge of that contact lens and gave the white part of your eye a little infection but probably more importantly is your cornea, which is the clear part of the eye that rests right above the colored part of everybody's eye. And if that were to get roughed up for have an abrasion and get an infection that could really leave that person with a permanent and a severe loss of vision. So that's why my first, second and third answer is please don't wear those contact lenses just to make your Halloween costume more impressive.

## Where should people buy contacts from?

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You should only buy contact lenses which are medical devices from licensed health care providers, either ophthalmologist or optometrist who are who are trained and licensed in every state to prescribe those. Buying contact lenses from other individuals means that you're not getting the same type of professional evaluation or fitting and so really only buy your contact lenses, or at least the prescription the fitting from your optometrist and your ophthalmologist because there are once you have your

