

A warning about costume contacts

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers about the risks of Halloween costume contacts.

Seen by some as the finishing touch to a ghoulish getup, the FDA says the poorly fitted contacts could be the beginning of serious [eye problems](#).

When it comes to colored or decorative contact lens—Halloween buyer beware.

"The only safe contact lenses are when you go to an eye doctor—so somebody who is actually certified in being able to look at your eyes and fit you for a prescription," says Dr. Vandana Bhide, an internal medicine specialist.

Dr. Bhide is echoing a recent warning from the FDA, saying, for contacts, a prescription is a must. The alert specifically lists boutiques, novelty and Halloween stores as places not to buy contact [lens](#).

That's because contact lenses are not one-size-fits-all devices. Dr. Bhide says a poor fit can cause serious injury.

"And, specifically, the part of the eye that's most concerning is what's called the cornea, which is the front," she says. "It's the clear part of the eye that covers the pupil and the colored part of the eye, and that is a membrane that can very easily get damaged."

Scratches on the cornea, infections and impaired vision are all possible results of bad lenses.

"It's really not worth all of the potential problems that you can have," adds Dr. Bhide.

Her advice is skip the colored contacts and the risks that come with them, and choose a happy—albeit slightly less spooky—Halloween.

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