

Indian children learn about caring for contact lenses

School children, teachers and parents joined educators and students at a Gujarati optometry college for an innovative event to promote awareness of contact lenses. Nilesht Thite reports



'Care for your eyes' was the theme for OPTO EXPO 2020, organized by the [Hari Jyot College of Optometry \(HJCO\)](#) and [Rotary Eye Institute Navsari](#), Gujarat in association with eye care partners such as the [Optometry Council of India](#), [Vision 2020](#) and [India Vision Institute](#) (11-13 February).

Part of the event was dedicated to creating awareness of contact lenses. The two main areas were:

- Application and removal of contact lenses
- Myths and facts about contact lenses

Over 900 school-going children with more than 40 teachers and a few parents participated in the event. The children were from various schools in Navsari.



HJCO students demonstrated how soft and flexible current soft contact lenses are to the children and parents. Around 20-30% of the children knew about soft contact lenses but most of them were seeing a contact lens for the first time. Almost everyone was surprised when they touched and felt the lenses in their hands. The experience made them believe that contact lenses could be worn by anyone.



FIACLE Nirav Mehta in discussion with teachers and parents at the Navsari event

Video demonstration of contact lens application and removal helped establish that contact lenses are not harmful to the eyes.

Many children were asking about lenses without power. The optometry students discussed colored contact lenses with them. One of the students was wearing colored lenses and the children were fascinated by the look. During the discussion, children asked questions regarding the prescriptions, safety, availability of lenses etc, and they were answered by optometry students and educators satisfactorily.

This entire activity created awareness of contact lenses. The event also helped optometry students to develop their communication skills and teamwork, and boosted their confidence.