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A survey on the use of fitting guides for soft multifocal contact lenses

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Purpose: Within this thesis, a survey was used to examine the usage and application of fitting guides for soft multifocal contact lenses.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted. A total of 394 participants took part in the online survey, the majority (45%) were "Augenoptikermeister". Out of these participants, 285 regularly fit soft multifocal contact lenses, while 91 did not. The questionnaire was created by systematically comparing fitting guides from several leading soft multifocal contact lens manufacturers. Opticians were recruited via social media portals and email distribution lists. The survey of the fitters included both the procedure in practice and the evaluation of the recommended fitting steps of the manufacturers.

Results: 76.34% of the participants who fit soft multifocal contact lenses declared to use the fitting guidelines. The use of fitting guides is independent of professional experience. Nearly half of those who do not use fitting guides specified that they used them in the past but no longer need this kind of advice. Most contact lens fitters agree with the steps in the manufacturer's recommendation for soft multifocal contact lenses. For the approach in practice, the determination of pupil size is shown to be of little relevance,

respondents consider the analysis of topometry or tear film to be more important. When it comes to optimization, practitioners usually do not follow manufacturer recommendations, they prefer/follow their own experience. There is no correlation between the use of fitting guidelines and the subjectively assessed success in fitting soft multifocal contact lenses by the fitters.

Conclusions: For the first time, a sample on the use of fitting guides for soft multifocal contact lenses was conducted. The study shows that the fitting guides are used in practice and provide valuable support. However, some discrepancies were identified that are worth to be included in the fitting guides to better address opticians needs. Regular updates of the fitting guides, based on the practical experience of soft multifocal contact lens fitters, would therefore be useful. Further studies could help to prove the efficiency of fitting with a fitting guide.

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