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CONSUMER ADVISORY: OPTICIANS COUNCIL OF CANADA URGES TRICK OR TREATERS TO SEE HALLOWEEN SAFELY

Winnipeg, MB - The Opticians Council of Canada (OCC) urges consumers to heed their warnings when considering cosmetic contact lenses (non-corrective coloured lenses) for their Halloween costumes. Cosmetic lenses, sold over-the-counter as costume accessories at some retail outlets and online, are used to change the colour and/or appearance of eyes. While cosmetic lenses are readily available, consumers need to make the right educated choices.

“Improper lenses can lead to allergic reaction, infection, swelling of the cornea, and even blindness,” says Robert Dalton, Executive Director of the Opticians Association of Canada. “Severe eye infections have been reported in as little as 24 hours, and some of this damage can be difficult to treat or repair.”

The OCC recommends consulting a Licensed Optician to help you make the right decision on a product that won't harm your vision. A Licensed Optician can also provide training on contact lens use and instruction on hygiene.

“Getting a cheap pair of contact lenses online or at the costume store for your werewolf outfit seems like a great idea- until your vision is permanently damaged by improper fit or you use a bad lens,” says Drew Jeffries of the College of Opticians of Alberta. “This is when that cheap pair of lenses has cost you more than you bargained for.”

Here are emergency care instructions if you find yourself in a situation with any contact lens that has not been fitted or cared for properly, and is now difficult to remove:

- 1) Drink plenty of fluids to rehydrate.
- 2) Gently try to move the contact lens. If you can't move it at all, apply hydrating eye drops and once the lens has been rehydrated, attempt to remove it with care.
- 3) Go see your closest vision care professional to have it removed safely and properly, and to treat irritation immediately.

Licensed Opticians are regulated vision health professionals who ensure that you receive the essential care and education necessary when choosing contact lenses, eyeglasses or low vision aids. They are trained to recommend and safely fit a full range of devices that help improve your eyesight and take into account your lifestyle, environment, and aesthetics. They can also guide you along a safe and appropriate path to resolve all your vision health issues.

To find out more about what a Licensed Optician is, or to find one in your area visit LicensedOptician.ca.

The Opticians Council of Canada (OCC) is an Opticians organization with representatives from all Canadian provincial regulatory bodies, associations and teaching institutions as participating delegates. The Opticians Council of Canada is an incorporated body under the Canada Corporations Act and received final Letters Patent in July 2010.

The organization shares a common interest in eye care and vision health. The OCC provides national leadership on Canada's vision health issues and in the development of related public policy. OCC accomplishes its goals through the mandates of its member associations by consultation, collaboration, advocacy, research, education and service. The OCC believes that all Canadians are entitled to full and equal access to eye care.

For more information about Opticians Council Of Canada visit OpticiansCouncil.ca