General Lens Selection, Dispensing & Fitting Tips

Lens Selection

With all the possible choices, it is often difficult to decide which lens to recommend to a patient.

1. Think about safety and weight. Select a lens style that is available in the material that meets these needs.
2. Think critically about the visual needs of the patient. Do they need to view objects at one particular distance for extended periods of time? Do they need to be able to see all distances at all times? Do they need to read above their head frequently?
3. Think about the cosmetic needs of the patient. Will a thinner lens or one without a line enhance their self image?
4. Carefully analyze the relationship between the lenses and the frame. Size and shape affect lens performance.
5. Think about lens tint availability. Not all styles come in every tint.
6. Creative thinking may answer your patient's needs. A round segment in one lens, decentred temporally may allow a golfer or skier to perfect their sport and still be able to read the occasional score card or lunch menu. A ribbon segment may help a bedridden patient to read and occasionally look under the segment to view the television. There is no doubt that if you can solve a tricky situation, your practice will gain a very loyal patient who refers friends.

Fitting & Dispensing

1. Always pay close attention to the vertex distance and pantoscopic angle. Decreasing the vertex distance or increasing the tilt can drop the perceived height of a reading segment or increase the reading field of vision.
2. When eyes are not level, always look at previous lenses. Ask the patient if there was any problem with previous lenses. If unsure about OC placement or segment placement, dot the lenses or draw a line to indicate the proposed position and ask for patient feedback.
3. With multifocals, always think of vertical prismatic imbalance if there are 1.50-2.00 diopters of difference in lens power between the two eyes. You may need to consider slab-off.
4. If the correct frame size is not in stock, you may be able to take measurements anyway. The bridge size must be identical to what is needed. If the eye size is only 2 mm. different, proceed. If the stock frame is 2 mm. larger than needed, subtract 1 mm. from OC or segment heights. If the stock frame is 2 mm. smaller than needed, add 1 mm. to OC or segment heights. If the stock frame is more than 2 mm. difference in eye size, order the proper size and then take the measurements.