

Preface

Seven years ago, in Cancun, Mexico, at the meeting of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology, one of the editors came across a little book in Portuguese on contact lenses. Edited and written by two of Brazil's leaders in the specialty of contact lenses—Cleusa Coral-Ghanem, MD and Newton Kara-Jose, MD—this slim volume had already made a significant impact in Brazil. In a country where contact lens practice is already quite sophisticated, the book was designed as a learning tool for the new practitioner. Given its utility as a manual for the beginning contact lens practitioner, the notion that this book might be made available in English immediately came to mind. In the Foreword to the second edition in Portuguese, Rubens Belfort, a recognized leader in both Brazilian and international ophthalmology, wrote that “if this book were written in English, it would be recognized the world over” as a useful and practical tool for the contact lens practitioner. His comments were perhaps prescient. And so, the project to bring a new contact lens manual to English-speaking eye care practitioners was launched.

This book is a contact lens “primer.” Originally signifying a small book for teaching children to read, the term *primer* now signifies any small book that is basic and introductory to a subject. There is already, of course, a spate of basic contact lens manuals on the market. Nonetheless, the present text is unique in at least two ways. First, it combines the somewhat quaint notion of a primer with the contemporary approach of FAQs—frequently asked questions. Guiding the novice stepwise into an acquaintance with the terminology and practice of contact lenses, it approaches questions as they arise in the “hands on” setting. Second, this new volume is the joint product of an ophthalmologist and

an optometrist. Unfortunately, differences in clinical interests and political currents have swept the two disciplines apart, and often what is written by one is not read by the other. This project brings together a long collaboration between ophthalmology and optometry that capitalizes on the expertise of both disciplines. As such, it is designed to be of use to ophthalmology residents, optometry students, practitioners in both fields beginning or returning to contact lens practice, and to technicians and assistants working in contact lens practices.

We have attempted to adapt the excellent base established by our colleagues in Brazil for both ophthalmology and optometry and have expanded and updated the contents for the English-speaking professional readership. Primary credit for this book must go to Drs. Coral-Ghanem and Kara-José and to the contributors in Brazil and the United States who have updated and rendered the chapters clear and utilitarian. The original text was translated from Portuguese into English by Dr. Mannis and was further edited in English by Drs. Mannis and Zadnik. We hope that this text will answer the readers' questions—those you wanted to but perhaps were afraid to ask because they seemed so basic.

MARK MANNIS, MD
Sacramento, California

KARLA ZADNIK, OD, PhD
Columbus, Ohio

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Mannis, M.J.; Zadnik, K.; Coral-Ghanem, C.; Kara-José, N.

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