

# Vision of Love: Ketchum Makes a Patient's Wedding Day Wish Come True

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When Summer Li first met Justin Kwan, OD, Assistant Professor and Chief of Cornea and Contact Lens Services at Marshall B. Ketchum University, she had one wish: to look her best on her wedding day. She did not want to worry about the inconvenience of her glasses sliding down her nose, make-up smudges or glare while taking photo.

While most brides would simply switch out their eyeglasses for contacts, Summer had a unique situation. A graphic designer who admittedly lives in front of her computer, her strabismus (eye turn) prevented her from wearing soft contact lenses. “I wanted to see everything clearly to best remember my wedding day,” she says. “But without my eyeglasses!”

### **A SEARCH FOR ANSWERS**

Summer had always worn eyeglasses growing up; but in college, she noticed a huge difference in her vision. “After working or gaming, I’d have headaches and extreme eye fatigue,” she remembers. “I also couldn’t focus, and my eye turn started happening.”

Summer’s eyes turned inward (also known as esotropia), making her feel very self-conscious. She began a 10-year journey of going to various optometrists who gave her different prescriptions such as reading glasses and bifocals. “I used to wear contact lenses but as my condition worsened, I couldn’t wear them,” she explains. “But when I was prescribed prism eyeglasses, it was a miracle for me.”

Prism lenses in her eyeglasses got her eyes to work together and align her vision, preventing double vision and the eye turn. Her first prism prescription worked for a time but then the eye fatigue returned, so she went to the University Eye Center at Ketchum Health. Summer learned that vision therapy wouldn’t be effective for people like her with inward eye turn.

“Eye muscle surgery is the only option to permanently fix that issue and I was looking for other options,” she says. After her comprehensive evaluation, she received stick- on prism lenses that she could put over her prism eyeglasses that allowed her to see correctly again.

But when she became engaged, she investigated the possibility of using contact lenses. Her optometrist, Alex Corbin Liu, OD, '03, an alumnus of Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University, referred her back to the University Eye Center and to his friend, Dr. Justin Kwan.

## **KETCHUM FINDS THE ANSWER – SCLERAL LENSES**

Dr. Kwan remembers that Summer first contacted him via email and he was impressed by the research she had undertaken. After they corresponded, she arrived at his clinic with her fiancé, Stephen, at her side.

He welcomed their questions to understand the intricacies of how he could solve her wedding issue through scleral lenses. “We took the time to discuss their knowledge and present new ideas,” he says. “But we also wanted her to try on lenses and experience what was possible for her, so she could wear scleral contact lenses that would give her the prism prescription to not only see clearly but also to help with her eye turn.”

Scleral lenses are large-diameter gas permeable (GP) lenses that vault over the entire corneal surface and rest on the “white” of the eye (the sclera). Due to their size, scleral lenses are more stable on the eye and less likely to dislodge, especially for sensitive eyes or irregularly shaped corneas.

“When you put a prism in a regular soft or hard contact lens, it rotates down and worsens the double vision rather than correcting it,” Dr. Kwan explains. “But through our use of a corneal topographer and a series of diagnostic fittings, we can direct the lab to place the prism in the exact location of a scleral lens to correct Summer’s vision. Her lenses wouldn’t work on anyone else but her.”

After three visits to obtain the perfect fit, Summer reached a new high in her journey to improve her eye sight. “This was probably one of the best decisions I’ve made,” she says. “They took some adjusting and getting used to, but the scleral lenses felt great.”

## **A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT**

Summer’s wish came true. On her wedding day, she walked down the aisle wearing her new scleral contact lenses.

“Summer was so nice to send me a photo of her on her wedding day,” Dr. Kwan says with a smile.

Although Summer wears her prism eyeglasses daily, she has the option to wear her contact lenses for special occasions such as work presentations.

“I feel more confident,” she says. “But I also practice better habits by taking more frequent breaks throughout the day and resting my eyes.”

After Summer shared her experience with Dr. Kwan and his team on Yelp, a young woman reached out to her with questions. Summer didn't hesitate to refer the woman to Dr. Kwan. “I'm so grateful to give hope to others who struggled as I once did,” she says.



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