

Orthoptic / Ophthalmology Department

Using Atropine Drops for Occlusion Therapy

Information for parents and carers

Your child's name: _____

Instructions

Insert one drop of Atropine, as prescribed _____ per week on days _____

What is Atropine?

Atropine belongs to a group of medicines called mydriatics (medicines that widen the pupil) and cycloplegics (medicines used to relax the muscles that enable the eyes to focus).

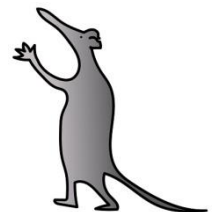
Why has my child been prescribed Atropine?

Atropine drops may be used as an initial treatment of amblyopia (lazy eye) or when conventional occlusion (patching) is not successful, or your child is not tolerating eye patches. The aim is to blur the good eye to try to make the weaker, amblyopic eye, stronger.

What are the effects of Atropine?

Atropine has two effects when instilled in the eyes:

- It dilates the pupil (makes the black part of the eye larger).
- It relaxes the focusing of the eye which blurs near vision



The vision in the good eye will be blurred when looking at objects close up, forcing your child to use their weaker eye and helping to improve their vision. This encourages use of the eye with poorer vision for any near tasks such as reading, writing, drawing and computer work.

How to instill Atropine drops

- Always follow the dosage instructions on the Atropine label. This will tell you how many times per week to instill the drop.
- Always wash your hands before and after using the drops.
- Avoid touching the container against your child's eye.
- Put one drop of atropine into the good eye as directed. You may want to pull down the lower eyelid gently.
- Gently press on the inner corner of the eye. This helps to prevent the drop draining into the nose and being swallowed.
- Do not continue using the atropine eye drops if you do not have a follow up appointment. The treatment must be carried out under strict supervision

How do I know the Atropine has been put in correctly?

After approximately 30 minutes, you will notice the pupil of your child's eye enlarge.

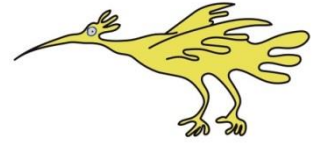
How long do the effects of the Atropine last?

Atropine will cause blurred vision which may last up to seven days or more after each drop. The pupil may also remain dilated for up to 14 days after the last dose.

If your child is at school then please inform their teacher about the Atropine treatment. Your child may want to hold books closer and their handwriting may be less neat than usual.

Are there any side effects?

As with most medicines some side effects may occur.



Common: The drops may make the dilated eye sensitive to light. Wearing a sun hat or sun glasses may help.

Rare / possible side effects: Increased temperature, Vomiting, Fever, Itchy or swollen eyelids, Flushing of face, Red or watery eyes, Dryness of skin/mouth, Restlessness, Nightmares, Hyperactivity, Irritability.

If any of the above, rare / possible side effects occur; stop the drops immediately and contact your GP or our Ophthalmology Unit on: 0151 252 5961 (or 5839).

Should my child still wear Glasses during this treatment?

YES. If your child wears glasses then they should continue to be worn full time.

Sometimes we may alter the strength of your child's glasses whilst Atropine is being used. This is to enhance the effect of the treatment.

If this occurs please always bring both sets of glasses to your child's appointment (altered strength glasses and your child's usual full prescription glasses).

How to store Atropine safely

Atropine is a muscle relaxant and is poisonous if eaten therefore care must be taken with storage.

- Keep Atropine out of reach of children.
- Store at room temperature.
- Do not use the Atropine beyond the expiry date.
- Atropine has been prescribed for your child and should not be given to any other person.

If your child accidentally swallows Atropine, encourage them to be sick and contact the nearest casualty department or your GP.

Where do I get repeat Atropine prescriptions?

Atropine will be prescribed for your child by one of our Ophthalmology Doctors in the Eye Department. Atropine will then be issued by the Hospital Pharmacy.

How often is my child seen?

Your child will be reviewed every four weeks, following commencement of Atropine.

It is important that:

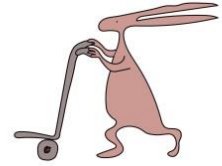
- If your child needs to be seen by any other Doctor, Dentist or Health Professional during this treatment, you must inform them that Atropine drops are being used.
- You tell your Ophthalmologist or Orthoptist if your child is taking any medication for any other causes.
- Do not use Atropine if your child suffers from heart problems or has a high fever.

What if I miss an appointment?

- Do not continue using Atropine if you have missed an appointment.
- You should re-arrange the appointment as soon as possible as this treatment must be carried out under strict supervision.

Contact details

Telephone: 0151 252 5961 (or 5839) Ophthalmology Patient Co-ordinators.



This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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