

Patient Information

Atropine Occlusion for children

Child's Name _____ Put drops in _____ eye 2 times per week

What is Atropine Occlusion Treatment?

Atropine 1% eye drops and Minims are a sterile solution of atropine sulphate BP 1% w/v for the treatment of amblyopia (weaker vision in one eye, sometimes known as a lazy eye) in children.

Atropine drops may be used as an alternative to patching treatment. The main aim of atropine occlusion is to temporarily blur the vision in the good eye (when viewing close objects) to promote vision in the weaker one.

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 bigger)
- It stops the eye from focusing at near (close up) – blurring the child's vision temporarily.

How does Atropine work?

Atropine is a long acting eye drop that blurs near vision in the eye with better vision by preventing the lens inside the eye from focussing. This encourages use of the eye with poorer vision for any near tasks such as reading, writing, drawing and computer work. Over a period of time vision in the weaker eye often improves.

How often should the drops be used?

One drop twice per week in the dominant **good** eye: that is on Sunday and Wednesday of each week that you are asked to continue the treatment.

Administering Atropine eye drops

Your child can lie on their back or sit with their head tipped back. Gently hold the eyelids open and put one drop anywhere between the lids. If your child struggles, it may be easier to put the drop in while they are asleep. Press the inner corner of the lower lid with a finger to block the tear duct for a minute after putting the drops in. This helps to prevent any drops from running into the nose.

What are the side effects?

- Do not use Atropine if your child suffers from heart problems or has a high fever.

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- It will make the dilated eye sensitive to light – so give your child a peaked hat to wear on very sunny days.
- The eye often stings for a short time after the drop is instilled.
- Tell your ophthalmologist or orthoptist if your child is taking any other medication before using atropine for the first time
- If your child becomes hot, irritable and complains of a sore throat or develops any of the following symptoms: a rash, headaches or nausea/vomiting **stop using the Atropine and seek medical advice immediately.**

How long will the side effects 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.

What other precautions do I need to take?

If your child is at school, 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. As the pupil is dilated your child may be more comfortable facing away from a window. On a sunny day your child may be more comfortable wearing a peaked cap while outside.

If your child needs to be seen by any other doctor or health professional during the treatment, it is important to inform them that Atropine drops are being used.

How to store Atropine safely

- Store the Atropine out of reach of children and at room temperature.
- Do not use the Atropine beyond the expiry date.
- If your child accidentally swallows Atropine, encourage them to be sick and contact the nearest casualty department or your GP.

Where to get repeat Atropine prescriptions

Atropine will be prescribed for your child by one of the doctors from the Eye Department.

Who to contact if you have any further queries?

Please telephone the orthoptic department that your child attends and ask to speak to one of the orthoptists:

Conquest Hospital
Eastbourne DGH

Tel: (01424) 755255 Ext: 8348
Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 4043

Patient Information

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – details below.

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

This information is available in alternative formats such as large print or electronically on request. Interpreters can also be booked. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offices, found in the main reception areas:

Conquest Hospital

Email: palsh@esht.nhs.uk - Telephone: **01424 758090**

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Email: palse@esht.nhs.uk - Telephone: **01323 435886**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

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