

How to instil your own Eye Drops

What are Eye Drops and Why do I need them?

Eye drops are a means of instilling medicine directly into the eye.

Eye drops are usually a prescribed medication and part of a treatment plan by the Ophthalmologist (eye doctor) for a certain condition, e.g. Glaucoma, Conjunctivitis, Dry Eye, after surgery and many other conditions.

Care Before instilling Eye Drops

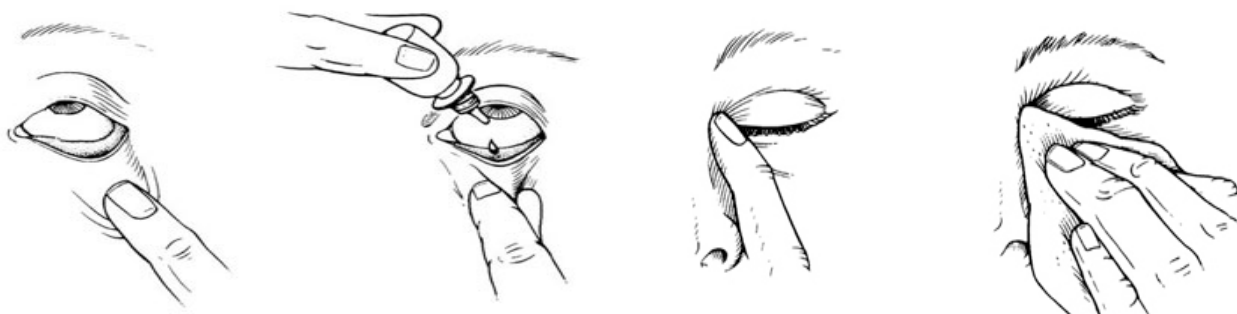
Before instilling your eye drops, you need to:

- Make sure you wash and dry your hands thoroughly.
- Unscrew the cap of the bottle/dropper and place on a clean tissue.
- Some drops need to be shaken (check the packaging for details).

How to instil Eye Drops

- Tilt your head slightly back and gently pull down the lower eyelid to form a pocket. Alternatively, stand in front of a mirror and bend your head backwards.
- Hold the bottle/dropper above the eye (either placing on the bridge of the nose or above the eyebrow).
- Squeeze one drop into the lower eyelid pocket (Try not to touch your eye, eyelashes, or anything else with the bottle/dropper tip in order to keep it clean).
- Once one drop is instilled, let go of the eyelid and close your eye whilst pressing gently on the tear duct (inner corner of the eye) with your finger for one minute.
- Wipe away any liquid that falls on to your cheek with a tissue.
- Repeat with other eye if the drop is prescribed for both eyes.
- Replace the cap to the bottle/dropper.

If more than one eye drop is prescribed, leave at least a five minute interval between each application. (This will stop the first eye drop from being diluted or washed away).



Side effects of using Eye Drops

The most common side effect of eye drops is stinging or irritation. This usually lasts for a very short time once the eye drop is instilled. However, prolonged stinging/irritation, redness unusual visual symptoms, or if your condition becomes worse, should be reported to your GP or to the Eye Clinic for further advice. Please read the manufacturers information leaflet provided with your drop bottle.

Storage of Eye Drops

- Keep the bottle/dropper closed in a cool, dark place (unless otherwise stated).
- Most eye drops will expire after one month of opening. This can vary between the different types of eye drops. Please check the packaging of the eye drops or ask the Pharmacist or Eye Clinic if you are in any doubt.

Problems or difficulty with instilling your eye drops

There are different methods of instilling eye drops into the eye, if you have trouble with standing up whilst applying the drops, the alternative is to lie down and apply the drops as stated above. Speak to a nurse for any further advice or information.

If you find that your hands are weak and have trouble squeezing the bottle/dropper there are devices available to help you, which are called dispensing aids. Contact your Pharmacist or speak to the Eye Clinic for further assistance and advice.

Contact lenses and eye drops

Unless you are told otherwise you should not wear contact lenses in the affected eye for the course of the treatment. Some drugs and preservatives in eye drops can accumulate in soft contact lenses and may cause harm. Seek advice from your GP or Optometrist should you have any concerns.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

Instil the drop as soon as you remember, however if it is time for your regular dose skip the missed dose, **DO NOT** double the dose to catch up.

Contact information

If you have any problems, and require further information or need advice about your eye drop medication, please telephone:

Eastbourne DGH Eye Clinic – Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 771744 - During 9am to 5pm.
(answerphone)

When leaving an answerphone message, please include your name, date of birth and telephone number, (if possible your X number).

Sources of information

Harding, M., T, Kenny and C, Jackson. 2016. How to use Eye Drops. www.patient.info/health/how-to-use-eye-drops. (Accessed 05/07/2016)

Ring, L. and M, Okoro. 2016. A handbook of ophthalmic nursing standards and procedures.(2nd edition) United Kingdom: M&K Update.

Shaw, M. 2016. How to administer eye drops and eye ointment. Nursing Standard. Vol. 30. Issue. 39. Pages 34-36.

Important information

This patient information 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 the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Hand hygiene

We are 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

If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

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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The directorate group that has agreed this patient information leaflet: Ophthalmology Department

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