

# Atropine eye drops for Amblyopia Therapy (Occlusion)

Ophthalmology

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

# Instructions

Instil Atropine 1% eye drops into the better seeing eye, once per day on Saturday and Sunday for four weeks only.

## How should I put in the atropine?

1. Wash your hands thoroughly, peel the over-wrap apart and take out the drops
2. Get your child into any of these positions to give the eye drops:
  - Tilt your child's head back
  - Lay your child flat on their back
  - Ask someone to hold your child in a safe and comfortable position
  - Wrap your baby or young child in a light blanket or sheet to keep their arms and legs still if you are on your own
3. Twist off the cap
4. Avoid touching the dropper against your child's eyelids or eyelashes
5. There are two methods you may now use:
  - A. Closed eye method
  - B. Open eye method

Ensure that the Atropine Eye drops are instilled into the better seeing eye.

### A. The closed eye method

- It's recommended that your child has their head tilted back and is supported for this method of instillation. Ideally if they can lie flat on their back
- Gently squeeze until a drop of liquid falls onto the corner of the eye requiring the eye drops (the eye with the better level of vision NOT the weaker eye)" eye nearest the nose
- Ask your child to keep their eyes closed until the eyelashes are wet, then dab off the excess liquid with a tissue, but do not completely dry the lashes

- Ask them to open their eyes slowly, while making sure they remain in a stable position with their head held so the drops do not run down their face

## B. The open eye method

- Gently pull down the lower eyelid of the better seeing eye with your finger, ask your child to look upwards
  - Gently squeeze until a drop of liquid falls into the gap between the eyeball and lower eyelid
  - Ask your child to close their eyes. Gently press on the inner corner of the eye that has had the drops instilled for 30 seconds, this will help to stop the solution draining away into the nose and throat
6. Your child can then open their eyes and blink. You may then dry their lashes completely
  7. Always wash your hands and your child's hands after using the drops to avoid it being swallowed or inhaled
  8. Continue putting the eye drops in twice weekly into the same eye (Saturday and Sunday) for four weeks

## Appointments

Your child will need to be reviewed regularly while they are having treatment - typically every four weeks.

If you change your appointment or are unable to attend when planned, please ensure you speak to a member of the Orthoptic Department and let a clinician know that your child is having treatment with Atropine eye drops.

If your appointment is significantly delayed, treatment may need to be stopped temporarily until you can re-attend regularly.

## Important information

- Do not use the atropine beyond the expiry date
- Do not use the atropine drops for more than four weeks without being reviewed in the Orthoptic Department

## What effects do the eye drops have?

**Dilated pupil:** Atropine eye drops cause the pupil of the eye you are putting drops in to widen and become dilated. This means that it will remain large, and non-reactive to light for between 7 and 14 days after the treatment has stopped.

**Blurred vision:** As the pupil will be dilated, this will affect focusing ability causing blurred vision at near which may last for up to seven days or more.

**Sensitivity to light:** Due to the pupil being dilated, the eye will be unable to constrict to control the amount of light entering the eye. You may find it helpful for your child to wear sunglasses or a cap, or dim room lights.

**Swapping squint:** If your child has a squint (turn in the eye), you may notice that the squint swaps between the eyes - this is a sign that vision may have started to improve. In cases where the squint swaps into the other eye all of the time, please contact the Orthoptic department as a sooner appointment may be required.

## Are there any side effects I should look out for?

Do not use atropine if your child is allergic to any of the ingredients or if they experience significant side effects. Please read the leaflet which accompanies the eye drops.

Your child may feel a little discomfort when initially instilled.

Tell your ophthalmologist or orthoptist if your child is taking any other medication.

If your child becomes hot and complains of a sore throat, becomes irritable or develops any of the following symptoms, stop using the atropine and seek medical advice immediately:

- A rash
- Headaches
- Nausea (feeling sick) or vomiting (being sick)

# Other Frequently asked questions

## What is amblyopia?

Amblyopia is when there is poor vision in one eye, which is not due to a disease of the eye. It occurs when normal visual development is prevented or disrupted in childhood. It is usually due to:

- A squint – when one eye is ‘straight’ and the other eye turns in, out, up or down
- The need for glasses – where one lens may be stronger than the other due to an in-balance in prescription between both

Ideally treatment should be commenced before seven years of age as vision typically stops developing after this age, however, there is evidence to suggest that treatment can be successful after this age too.

## What is Amblyopia Therapy?

Amblyopia therapy (occlusion) is a method of treatment which is used to help improve vision when it is below normal levels in one eye. The aim is to encourage use of the weaker eye in order to stimulate vision to develop. This can be achieved by either patching the ‘good eye’ for a specific number of hours daily to completely block out the vision in that eye, or by using eye drops to blur the vision of the good eye.

## Will vision get better on its own?

Your child should have been given a period of monitoring or adaptation to glasses (if required) before commencement of treatment is considered. If sufficient improvement to vision is not seen then it is unlikely that eye vision will improve on its own.

## How do the atropine eye drops work?

Atropine is an eye drop which is used to dilate the pupil of the good eye in order to blur its vision when viewing objects at near. The aim is to encourage the patient to use their ‘weaker eye’ to see, thus stimulating visual development in that eye.

## Will atropine improve my child's squint?

**No:** the aim of using Atropine eye drops is to improve the vision in the weaker eye.

If your child has a squint, you may notice that the squint swaps between the two eyes when using drops. Do not worry about this as it is often a sign that vision is developing in the weaker eye.

In cases where the squint swaps into the other eye all of the time, please contact the Orthoptic department as a sooner appointment may be required.

## Does my child need to wear their glasses at the same time?

**Yes:** If your child has glasses it is important that they continue to wear their glasses full time.

## How long will my child need to use atropine drops?

It is not possible to determine how long the treatment will last.

The duration will depend on several factors such as your child's level of vision at the start of the regime, compliance with drops and glasses (if required), presence of a squint and their age.

You will typically be reviewed every four weeks in the Orthoptic department to monitor the vision.

## How can I help prepare my child for having eye drops?

It is important that we adopt a positive approach when preparing children for eye drops as negativity can significantly affect your child's co-operation and compliance for treatment.

## How often should I put in the eye drops to the good eye?

The instruction regime will be given to you by your orthoptist (or on the first page of this leaflet). The drops can even be put in whilst your child is asleep. It is important to put in an eye drop at your scheduled time even if the pupil may still be dilated from the day before.

## What should I do if I forget a dose of Atropine eye drops?

Use the eye drops as soon as you remember the missed dose. However, If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue with the regular dosing schedule. Do not use a double dose to make up for a missed dose.

## Contact us

For further information or if you have any questions, please contact the Orthoptic Department on:

### **Wolverhampton Eye Infirmary**

New Cross Hospital  
Wolverhampton Road  
Wolverhampton  
WV10 0QP

Tel: 01902 695830

### **Cannock Eye Centre**

Cannock Chase Hospital  
Brunswick Road  
Cannock  
WS11 5XY

Tel: 01543 576680

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowałiby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。