

Patient Information

Atropine 1% drop treatment for lazy eyes

Introduction

Your child has a condition called amblyopia or "lazy eye". This is where the vision in one eye has been found to be lower than the vision in the other eye. It may have been caused because your child has a squint (turn in their eye), or it may be due to your child requiring different strength lenses in each eye. It may also be a combination of both these causes.

Atropine 1% eye drops are one method used to treat a lazy eye, usually in cases of mild to moderate levels of reduced vision. The Atropine drop will enlarge (dilate) the pupil of the eye with good vision, preventing this eye from focussing on near objects and blurring the vision in that eye for 24 hours a day. When your child looks at things close to them they will then have to use their lazy eye to see, this increased use should stimulate their vision to improve.

The effect of the drop is quite long lasting; it can continue to work for up to two weeks after the last drop has been used.

How to use Atropine 1% eye drops

On the first day of treatment, one drop of Atropine is put into your child's good eye in the morning and also in the evening. Then one drop is put into the same eye every Wednesday and Saturday morning or evening throughout the treatment period.

The first prescription for the drops will be given to you by the Orthoptist, and then you will need to get repeat prescriptions from your own GP.

Regular attendance

It is important that we see your child every few weeks to monitor the improvement in the lazy eye. If your child's vision improves to a satisfactory level, the drops will be gradually reduced and stopped. If your child's vision has not improved after three months, patches may be suggested as an additional treatment.

Should your child's vision still be improving after six months of using the drops, a break in treatment of one month will be given before continuing.

How to put in the eye drops

Is it important to wash both yours and your child's hands before putting in the drops.

With your child either sitting or lying down, ask them to tip their head backwards and look upwards. Gently pull down the lower eyelid and put one drop into the outside corner of the eye, then release the lower eyelid.

Ask your child to keep their eye shut for one minute while you gently press your finger against the inner corner of their eye to stop the drops running away into the tear ducts that are positioned there. If a lot of drops run into the tear ducts they can be taken into the body and have an effect on other parts of the body. If putting the drops in becomes difficult, try using them when your child is asleep.

Wash your and your child's hands again after putting in the drops to stop Atropine getting into your own eyes or ingested.

Bright sunlight may dazzle when their eye is dilated, so a peaked cap may make them more comfortable.

Effectiveness of treatment

It can take longer for your child's vision to improve with Atropine treatment compared to wearing a patch, but evidence shows that it can be as successful.

Possible problems

Some children can have an allergic reaction to Atropine such as swollen eyes or a rash. If this happens, stop using the Atropine and contact the department on the telephone number below.

Atropine must be kept in a safe place out of the reach of children as the drops are harmful if swallowed.

Note: the information in this booklet is provided for information only. The information found is **not** a substitute for professional medical advice or care by a qualified doctor or other health care professional. **Always** check with your orthoptist if you have any concerns about your condition or treatment. This is only indicative and general information for the procedure. Individual experiences may vary and all the points may not apply to all patients at all times. Please discuss your individual circumstances with your orthoptist.

The **Orthoptic Department** at Russells Hall Hospital: **01384 456111 ext. 3636** (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday).

Eye emergency, out of hours

In case of an eye emergency after the closing hours of the Eye Clinic (including weekends and bank holidays), please contact the eye doctor on call by ringing the switchboard at:

Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre on 0121 507 4440

The doctor on call is usually based at the Eye Centre, City Hospital, Dudley Road, Birmingham. They may need to call you back, and if necessary, they will arrange for you to visit them.

We are always happy to answer any questions regarding your child's treatment, if after reading this leaflet you still have concerns or questions please call the department on: **01384 456111 ext. 3636.**

