

Further information

Clinical Nurse Specialist for Paediatric Ophthalmology:

Tel: (01223) 596414.

Clinic 3:

Tel: (01223) 216105.

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Document history

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Department of Paediatric Ophthalmology

Parent Information

Information about inserting your child's Atropine eye drops at home

Why have you provided me with Atropine eye drops for my child?

Either your child's eyes are very dark and they have taken a long time for the pupils to dilate, extending your time in this clinic. Or your child became very distressed when the nurse tried to insert the eye drops. Inserting the drops at home could well make your next appointment more pleasant for both you and your child.

What does Atropine do?

Atropine has two effects when inserted in the eyes:

- Dilates the pupil (makes the black dot in the middle of the eye larger).
- Stops the eye from focusing properly, which blurs the child's near (or close up) vision.

How long do the effects of the Atropine last?

Atropine will cause blurred vision which may last up to seven days or more after using it. The pupil may also remain dilated for up to 14 days.

Side effects/warnings

- Do not use atropine if your child suffers from heart problems or has a high fever.
- It will make the dilated eye sensitive to light so avoid bright light. Wearing sunglasses and/or a sun hat may help.
- Your child may feel a little discomfort when initially inserted, although the drops do not sting.
- Tell your ophthalmologist (the doctor you see in clinic) 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: a rash, headaches, nausea/vomiting, **stop using the atropine and seek medical advice immediately.**

How should I insert the Atropine drops?

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gently pull down the lower eyelid of the eye with your finger to create a little 'pocket'/recess in which to place the drop.
3. Insert one drop of Atropine into the 'pocket'/recess.
4. Release the eyelid.
5. Press gently on the inner corner of the eye (by the side of the nose) for about one minute. This will avoid the solution draining away into the nose and then absorbed systemically.
6. Always wash your hands and your child's hands after using the drops to avoid it being taken internally.
7. Repeat the procedure as advised below in the "how often should I insert the eye drops" section.
8. If you should misplace the eye drops contact the Clinical Nurse Specialist for Paediatric Ophthalmology, or clinic 3.
9. The Atropine eye drops can be inserted whilst your child is asleep, which you may find easier.

It is important that you:

- Do not use the Atropine beyond the expiry date.
- Store the Atropine in a dry place, away from strong light and below 25°C (room temperature). For example, in the fridge.
- Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.
- **Warning: Atropine is poisonous if taken internally.**

How often should I instil the eye drops?

Please follow the programme that the doctor/nurse has highlighted below. Either programme I or programme II:

Programme I

Insert one drop into each eye in the evening before your child's appointment and on the morning of their appointment.

Programme II

Insert one drop into each eye in the two evenings before their appointment, in the morning of the day before their appointment and in the morning of their appointment.