

How to put in eye drops to get your child ready for their eye assessment

Orthoptic Eye Clinic

Produced: May 2022

Information for Patients

Review: May 2025

Leaflet number: 1305 Version: 1

Introduction

Your child is due to have an eye test (assessment) to check if they need glasses and/or check the health inside their eyes. To do this assessment eye drops will need to be given by parents/carers before the appointment time. The eye drops relax the focusing of the eye and enlarge (dilate) the pupil.

There are 3 types of drops you may be given:

- **Cyclopentolate** - cyclopentolate eye drops are used to temporarily relax the focusing of the eyes. This allows examination of the health of the back of the eye. It also allows us to carry out a test to see if glasses are needed, and if so, what prescription is needed (refraction test).
- **Tropicamide** - tropicamide is used to dilate (enlarge) the pupil of the eye, to prepare for certain eye examinations. Tropicamide is regularly used alongside cyclopentolate in people with darker eyes to make the dilation process more effective.
- **Atropine** - atropine eye drops are used to temporarily relax the focusing of the eyes. It works in a similar way to cyclopentolate, but is longer lasting and can make the dilation process more effective in people with darker eyes.

How and when to put in the eyes drops

1. Wash your hands and check the expiry date of the drops before putting them in. Do **not** put the drops into your child's eyes if they are out of date, please contact the department if this is the case.

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or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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2. You have been given a small packet with individual eye drops (called a minim). You will need to twist the top off the eye drops to remove it. This will allow you to squeeze the bottle to insert the drops into the eyes.
3. If you have been given both cyclopentolate and tropicamide to use, please make sure that cyclopentolate is given first. We will record which drops have been given to you on the last page of this leaflet.
4. The drops should be put in the eyes between **20 minutes and 1 hour before** your appointment time.
5. When you put the drops in you may find it helpful to have help from another adult, and if your child lays down facing towards the ceiling. Or you may wish to do this while your child is asleep, making sure there is no more than 1 hour until the appointment.
6. Hold the eye drops in your dominant hand and use the other hand to gently pull down the lower eyelid to form a pocket (as shown in the picture below). Encourage your child to look up to the ceiling. Squeeze at least 1 drop into this pocket. It is normal for the drops to sting briefly when first put in. Repeat this step for the other eye.



7. If you are unsure whether the drops went in, it is safe to give another drop.
8. Make sure that the minim does not touch the surface of the eye as this may cause injury.
9. You may press gently on the inner corner of the eyes after giving the drop, as shown below, to prevent the drops from draining away too soon. You can then gently wipe your child's face.



10. The drops may take about 30 minutes to take effect.

If you are not successful in giving the eye drops please contact the department to seek advice.

What effects will the drops have?

Expected effects:

- The drops cause the black part of the eye (pupil) to enlarge.
- Blurred vision particularly for near tasks, for example reading.
- Sensitivity to light (sunglasses or a sun hat may be needed in bright weather).

The effects of these drops are temporary. When using cyclopentolate and/or tropicamide these effects may last up to 24 to 48 hours.

If using atropine these effects can last up to 7 days, and your child's pupil can remain dilated for as long as 14 days.

Can there be any side effects?

Do not give the eye drops if your child has had a reaction to the drops before. Please make the clinician aware of this.

If you notice any signs of a severe allergic reaction please seek urgent medical advice by calling the NHS helpline on 111, or emergency services on 999.

On rare occasions, flushing of skin, dry mouth, behavioural changes and problems going to the toilet, are some of the temporary side effects of the eye drops.

Any eye pain or unusual symptoms should be reported to the orthoptist or optometrist on arrival.

Warning: Atropine is poisonous if taken by mouth. Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Storage and disposal

- Store in a cool, dark place safely out of the reach of children.
- The small packet which the drops came in can be disposed of in your general waste bin. However the individual eye drops must be returned to the hospital or your local pharmacy to be disposed of in a clinical waste bin.
- Any unused drops should be returned to the department.

Which type of eye drops has my child been given?

The drops you may be given to prepare for your child's eye assessment will be recorded here:

Eye drop	Right eye	Left eye	Batch number	Expiry date	Time of installation
Cyclopentolate 1%					
Cyclopentolate 0.5%					
Tropicamide 1%					
Atropine 1%					

Notes:

Contact details

If you have any queries or concerns please contact the department on 0116 258 5277

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