

Atropine occlusion treatment for amblyopia

Information for parents



Outstanding
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Why does my child need occlusion?

Occlusion is advised when the vision in one eye is reduced (amblyopia). The better seeing eye may be occluded (temporarily blocked from working) with a patch or atropine eye drops.

How does atropine work?

Atropine enlarges the pupil (the black part of the eye), making it difficult for the eye to focus for close distances. This forces the weaker eye (amblyopic eye) to work harder and encourages the vision to improve.

Your child's teacher should be made aware of the treatment.

How do I use it?

The drops come in small, single-use plastic bottles called minims.

Use the drops on weekends

- Administer one drop of atropine into your child's **right / left eye** (delete as appropriate) on Saturday and Sunday each weekend.

How to give the drops

1. Check which eye to put the drop into.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Gently pull down the lower eyelid of the eye (the better seeing eye) with your finger.
4. Instil one drop of atropine into the centre of the inside of the lower eyelid. Do not let the dropper touch the eye.
5. Release the eyelid.
6. If possible, with the eye closed, gently press on the inner corner of the eye for one minute. This blocks the duct that runs from the eye to the nose and helps to keep the drop in the eye.
7. If you think that the drop did not get into the eye, do not instil another drop. Wait until the next drop is due.
8. Replace the lid on the minim bottle and throw away, even if you have not used all of the drops in it.
9. Always wash your hands and your child's hands after using the drops.

How long do the effects of atropine last?

Atropine will cause blurred vision, which may last up to 7 days or more after using it. The pupil may also remain dilated for up to 14 days.

Does my child still need to wear their glasses while using atropine?

Yes, it is important that your child continues to wear their glasses to give the weaker eye the best chance to improve.

What are the side effects?

As with most medicines, some side effects may occur. Please tell your orthoptist if your child is taking any other medications.

- Your child may be more sensitive to light than usual due to the larger pupil letting more light into their eye. Wearing a sun hat or sunglasses may help.
- Your child may feel a little discomfort when the drops are initially instilled, although they do not sting.

Please read the pharmacy information you will receive with the drops before starting the treatment.

Reported side effects are rare, but include:

- itchy or swollen eyes
- red or watery eyes
- dryness of the skin or mouth
- fever
- flushing of the face
- restlessness
- hyperactivity
- irritability
- vomiting.

If any of these occur, stop using the drops immediately and seek advice from your child's GP, pharmacy or 111.

Points to remember

Do not

- ✗ Use the atropine if your child suffers from heart problems or has a high fever.
- ✗ Administer the atropine if your child has a severe reaction to it.
- ✗ Use atropine beyond the expiry date.
- ✗ Continue using atropine if you have missed an appointment, as it may induce unwanted effects.

Do

- ✓ Store the atropine at room temperature, away from strong light and below 25° (room temperature).
- ✓ Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.
- ✓ Attend all follow up appointments with the orthoptic clinic so the effect of the atropine on your child's vision is monitored carefully.

I have run out of drops, what should I do?

Contact the orthoptic department.

➔ Telephone: 01872 253287



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