

Points to remember

- Store Atropine in a safe place out of the reach of children.
- Store at normal room temperature.
- Do not use the drops past the expiry date.
- Be careful not to get Atropine into your own eye as it could blur your vision. Always wash your hands before and after you insert the drops.
- The Atropine has been prescribed for your child and should not be given to any other person.
- Inform your child's school about the use of the drops and the dilated pupil.
- If you miss an appointment please call for another appointment as soon as possible.
- Please ensure that any doctor or dentist treating your child is aware that Atropine is being used.
- Tell your Ophthalmologist or Orthoptist if your child is taking any medication for any other causes before starting Atropine.
- Do not use Atropine if your child suffers from heart problems, is prone to allergies or has a high fever.

Contact us

If you wish to speak to someone by phone please contact the Orthoptic Department for Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust on 01872 253 287 and leave a message for an Orthoptist to return your call.

If you would like this leaflet in large print, braille, audio version or in another language, please contact the General Office on 01872 252690



Using Atropine to help your child adapt to glasses

Information for parents and carers



Who is this leaflet for?

Your child has been given Atropine eye drops to help them to adapt to their glasses. Before getting glasses, children often over-focus their eyes without showing any signs or symptoms. Unfortunately, some children are unable to stop over-focusing when they are given glasses. This causes their vision to be more blurred with their glasses than without them.

How will Atropine drops help?

Atropine will dilate your child's pupil (make the black part of the eye larger) and blur their vision. This allows their focusing ability to 'reset', which will allow them to focus through their glasses more easily.

How long is Atropine needed?

One drop of Atropine is to be inserted into each eye once daily for **5 days only**. It is important that your child wears their glasses during all waking hours, and is encouraged to look through the lenses. The effects of Atropine can last for up to 2 weeks after the last drop is instilled. It is important to continue encouraging glasses wear after finishing the drops.

Why is it important for my child to wear glasses?

A child's vision is still developing up to the age of 7-8 years of age. This means that connections between the eyes and the brain are still being made. This is known as the 'critical period' for visual development. If a child needs glasses and does not wear them during this period, their vision may not develop normally.

This can result in permanently reduced vision in one or both eyes despite the correct glasses prescription being given. This may affect your child's future, for example their ability to drive or choice of career.

How will I know if the drop has gone in correctly?

After around 30 minutes, you will notice the pupils of your child's eyes enlarge. They may or may not complain of blurred vision. Your child's glasses should help with this but blurred near vision for the duration of treatment is normal.

How do I apply the drops?

1. Wash your hands **before** and **after** using the Atropine.
2. Follow instructions on the medicine label when you collect the Atropine from the pharmacy.
3. Insert one drop of Atropine into both eyes, as prescribed, every day for **5 days**. You may prefer to do this at night when your child is asleep.
4. Gently press on the inner corner of the eye. This prevents the drop draining into the nose and being swallowed.
5. Only one drop should be inserted and any excess should be wiped away with a clean, soft tissue. You may find it helpful to gently pull down their lower lid and insert the drop into this space.
6. Avoid touching the container/bottle to your child's eye.

Will my child need any follow up?

You will be seen 4 weeks later. It is important that you attend this appointment.

Are there any risks or side effects?

As with most medicines some side effects may occur.

Normal side effects:

- increased light sensitivity – wearing a sunhat or avoiding bright lights may help
- blurring of vision.

Possible / rare side effects:

- increased temperature
- vomiting
- fever
- itchy or swollen eyelids
- flushing of face
- red or watery eyes
- dryness of skin/mouth
- restlessness
- nightmares
- hyperactivity
- irritability.

If any of the possible / rare side effects occur stop the drops immediately and contact your GP or your nearest Emergency Department (ED).