



Atropine 1% treatment for amblyopia

This leaflet explains how to use Atropine drops to treat amblyopia (lazy eye) and what the possible side effects are.

What is amblyopia?

A lazy eye or amblyopia occurs when the vision in one eye is reduced during the critical development of eyesight in childhood.

Treatment options:

- Patching of the good eye with an adhesive or fabric patch.
- Atropine drops instilled into the good eye.
- Non-intervention (accepting the reduced level of vision in the lazy eye).

How do Atropine drops work?

The drops relax the focusing muscles in the good eye during treatment which blurs the vision; this encourages the lazy eye to work. The drops also affect the muscles which dilates (enlarges) the pupil (dark circle at the centre of the eye). You may need to inform your child's school about the use/effects of atropine and the enlarged pupil.

How to use Atropine drops

- Store in a safe place, away from children, at room temperature (keep at less than 25C).
- Wash and dry your hands thoroughly before and after administering the drops.
- Place one drop from the single dose unit preparations (minims) into the good eye as instructed by the orthoptist.
- Do not re-use single dose unit preparations (minims). Use once then throw away.
- The drops should be used twice a week, e.g. Wednesday and Sunday or Saturday and Sunday.
- Do not use the drops after the expiry date written on the packaging has passed.
- Drops can be administered whilst child is asleep.

What are the side effects of Atropine?

- Blurred vision which can last up to two weeks after treatment (take extra precautions on activities such as stairs, riding a bike, etc).
- Sensitivity to light.
- As with most medicines, there may be some other side effects when using atropine drops. These include mild stinging and redness and an allergic reaction to the drops. In rare case, atropine can lead to increased eye pressure

Rarer general side effects:

- Dry mouth and skin.
- Redness of cheeks.
- Irritability and difficulty sleeping.
- High temperature.
- Difficulties passing urine and stool.
- Increased heartbeat.

These can occur when small amounts of the medicine are absorbed into the body from the eyes. To help prevent any medicine being absorbed into the body, press on the tear ducts on the inner side of the eyelids for a minute after putting the drop in (see figure 1).

If you think your child is experiencing symptoms related to Atropine drops, STOP the treatment and contact your pharmacist or doctor.

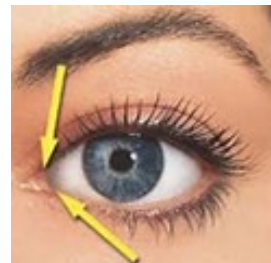


Figure 1

Contact us

If you have any questions please ring 0118 322 7681
Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 4.30pm.
Orthoptic Department
Level 2 Eye Block
Royal Berkshire Hospital

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Orthoptic Department: January 2024. Next review due: January 2026