

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Eye drops for children (cyclopentolate)

Follow up patients

This leaflet explains what eye drops do, why they are used and any potential side effects of the drops.

What do the drops do?

The eye drops have two main effects:

1. Dilate (enlarge) the pupils

Enlarging the pupils means that a light can be shone into the eyes without the pupils becoming smaller. This allows the doctor/optometrist to more easily assess your child's eyes.

2. Blur vision (especially near vision)

The drops stop your child's eyes from focusing as this can interfere with the test results.

Why are the drops used?

The drops are mainly used when a child is having a test called a refraction. This is performed to check if a child needs glasses. The drops are essential to make sure the results are accurate.

Putting the drops in

The drops may be put in by the orthoptist or alternatively they may be given to parents/guardians to put in before coming to the department.

You need to put one drop into each of your child's eyes 30 minutes to one hour before their appointment time.

It might help you to write down the time this needs to be done:

Appointment time:

Eye drops:

When putting in the drops, gently pull down on the child's lower lid and put one drop into the eye. Try to avoid touching the eye with the bottle. Repeat this for the second eye. As the drops can be uncomfortable when they go into the eye try to put them in as quickly as possible.

How long do the drops last?

The eye drops take around 30 minutes to work; this may take longer if your child has dark brown eyes.

The drops usually wear off between six and eight hours. For some children the pupils may take 24 to 36 hours to return to normal size.

Are there any risks from the eye drops?

As with any medication side effects are possible.

• Common side effects

Blurry vision and sensitivity to light are likely - bringing a hat or sunglasses can help with this.

• Rare side effects

Very occasionally some children are allergic to drops.

Their eyes may become red, or their skin may become flushed with a raised temperature. Please let your clinician know if this happens.

Going back to school

Your child can return to school following eye drops. However, they may have difficulty focusing on small detailed close work. It is therefore advisable to inform their teacher they have had eye drops.

What happens at the test?

The hospital optometrist or doctor will check and make sure your child's eyes are healthy. This is done by shining a bright light into the eyes.

They will also measure your child's eyes to decide if they need a prescription for glasses.

The factors which influence whether glasses are ordered include:

- a) Your child's vision.
- b) If they have a squint.
- c) The strength of lenses required.
- d) The age of your child.

After considering all these things a decision will be made whether to order glasses. If they are required you will be given a prescription voucher to take to your local opticians.

Contact details

If you have any queries about your child's treatment please contact the Orthoptic Department:

- **Email:** Sfh-tr.orthoptics@nhs.net
- **Urgent orthoptic queries:**
 - Telephone: 07768615247, Monday to Wednesday, 8am-4pm

- Telephone: 07825866704, Thursday to Friday, 8am-4pm

- **For appointment booking/cancellation:**

- Telephone: 01623 672383.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our Website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

BIOS Website: www.orthoptics.org.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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