

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Atropine occlusion (treatment for a lazy eye)

This leaflet explains Atropine occlusion treatment and how it works. It also tells you what to expect during the treatment.

What is Atropine?

Atropine occlusion is a treatment option for amblyopia (lazy eye). Atropine is a medicine that dilates (enlarges) the pupil which means that the eye can no longer focus on images close up resulting in temporarily blurred vision.

How does atropine work to treat amblyopia (lazy eye)?

Atropine eye drops are instilled into the good (non-lazy) eye to blur the vision. This then means the child is forced to use their lazy eye which improves the vision in that eye. Near tasks such as reading, writing and drawing can be beneficial.

How do we use the Atropine?

Atropine must be put into your child's eye **twice a week** to maintain the blurring effect.

- Always wash your hands before and after instilling the drops
- Gently pull down on the child's lower lid and put one drop into the good eye as directed. Avoid touching the eye with the bottle.

- Gently press on the inner corner of the eye to help avoid the drop draining into the nose and being swallowed.
- Try to avoid the child rubbing their eye to stop the spread of the drops into the other eye.
- Wash your hands again afterwards to avoid getting atropine in your own eye.
- Some parents find that instilling the drop while the child is asleep is effective and less stressful for the child.

How do I know the Atropine has been put in correctly?

You will notice the pupil of your child's eye enlarge after around 30 minutes.

How long do the effects of Atropine last?

Atropine will cause blurred vision which can last for up to seven days or more after each drop. The pupil can remain large for up to 14 days after the last dose.

How often will my child be seen?

Your child will be seen by the orthoptist on a four weekly basis. Please contact us in between if you have any concerns.

Are there alternative treatment options?

Amblyopia can also be treated with patching (wearing a sticky or cloth patch over the good eye). The orthoptist will discuss both options with you and help you to decide which option is best for your child.

Are there any side-effects of Atropine?

As with most medicines side-effects can occur:

- **Common side effects**

The drops can make the dilated eye sensitive to light. Wearing sunglasses or a hat may help with this.

- **Rare side effects**

Red swollen eye, headaches, increased temperature, dry mouth, irritability, irregular heartbeat, constipation, difficulty swallowing and difficulty urinating. If any of these symptoms occur STOP the eye drops and contact the department on one of the urgent telephone numbers below. Outside of these hours, please contact your GP or call 111.

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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