

Eyedrops - How To Use Them

Your optometrist or doctor may prescribe eyedrops for you to use to treat certain eye conditions, infections or diseases. Before you use any eyedrops, be sure to tell your optometrist about any other prescription or non prescription medications that you are taking or any allergies that you have. Here are some general tips about correctly putting eyedrops in your eyes:

- Look at the ceiling by standing or sitting and tilting your head backwards. Some people like to lie down on a flat surface.
- The best way to ensure the drop remains in your eye is to gently pull the skin of your lower eyelid between your thumb and index finger to create a "pocket" for the drop. If you are unable to master this, gently pull your lower lid down with your index finger.
- Look up (so you are not looking directly at the bottle) and gently release a drop into the pocket of your eye. Keep the bottle's nozzle or the eyedropper clean by not touching it to any part of your eyes.

If you are unable to get the drop into your eye because of blinking, try this:

- Close your eye and pull the lower lid down.
- Aim the drop into the inside corner of your eye.
- Open your eye and let the drop run into your lower lid. (Be sure to try the open-eye method at your next scheduled dose as it is a more reliable way to ensure the drop remains in your eye).

To help keep the medication in your eye and prevent it from escaping through the tear duct, your optometrist may instruct you to "occlude" this duct by gently pressing on the inside corner of your closed eye with your index finger for about three minutes. If drops have been placed in both eyes, you can perform occlusion by placing your thumb and index finger (or the index fingers of both hands) on either side of your nose and gently pressing down on the inside corners of both closed eyes. This step is very important with some medications, so do not skip it if your doctor specifies it. Gently blot your closed eyes with a tissue to wipe away any excess drops.

Factsheet

The Eyecare Trust is a registered charity that exists to promote awareness of all aspects of eye health. For more information call our public information line on 0845 129 5001 or log on to www.eyecaretrust.org.uk



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If you use more than one kind of drop, wait at least five minutes between drops. Be sure to follow all of the instructions that your doctor of optometry gives you and to complete the course of medication he or she prescribes. If you experience any side-effects, (such as burning, inflammation, puffiness, itching, etc.) call your optometrist immediately.

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