

Ointments - How To Use Them

Treatment for certain eye conditions, diseases or infections may require you to put ointment in your eyes. If your optometrist or doctor prescribes ointments, be sure to follow all directions about using them. Before you use any medication, be sure to tell your optometrist about any other prescription or non-prescription medications you are using or allergies that you have. Here is some general advice about correctly putting ointments in your eyes.

- Always wash your hands before handling medications
- Begin by expressing and discarding a 1/4 inch of ointment from the tube at each use.
- If applying to your eye's surface, form a pocket by gently pulling the skin of your lower eye-lid between your thumb and index finger to create a pocket for the ointment. Then express a 1/4" to 1/2" strip of ointment into the pocket (unless your doctor prescribes a different amount).
- Twist your wrist to break the strip of ointment from the tube.
- After placing the ointment in your eye, blink or close your eyes briefly. Your body heat will melt the ointment so it can spread across the surface of your eyes.
- If you are applying the ointment to the edges of your eyelids, express about a 1/2 inch strip of ointment onto your finger and glide it across the length of your closed lids near the base of your lashes.
- Use a soft, clean tissue to remove any excess ointment from the skin around your eyes. Be sure not to disturb the ointment placed in your eyes or on the edges of your eyes.

Be sure to follow all the directions that your optometrist or doctor gives and complete the course of medication that he or she prescribes. If you experience any side effects, (such as burning, inflammation, puffiness or itching) call your optometrist immediately.

Fact sheet

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

