



How to give medicines: eye drops

This leaflet gives tips about how to give eye drops to children. Leaflets on individual medicines are available on the Medicines for Children website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk.



This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of medicines in children. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Eye drops and eye ointment

Medicines for the eye are available as eye drops or as eye ointment.

Important things to know about eye drops and ointment

- Once opened, eye drops and ointments should not normally be kept more than 28 days. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.
- Sometimes eye drops or ointment can cause mild redness, stinging or blurred vision. This should go away after a few minutes, but if it persists or is severe, contact a doctor or pharmacist.
- Your child should not wear contact lenses during the whole course of the eye drops or ointment they have been prescribed, as the lenses could be damaged.
- If your child is using more than one eye medicine, try to leave at least 5 minutes between the different medicines.
- If your child is being treated for an infection, it is common to be given a separate bottle or tube for each eye.

Before you give eye drops or eye ointment

- If you have to give both eye drops and eye ointment, give the eye drops first and then the ointment
- Use the eye drops or eye ointment in one or both eyes, as directed by your doctor.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and hot water before and after giving the drops or ointment.
- The drops or ointment are easiest to give when your child is lying down.

How to give eye drops

It is important for your child to be still whilst you give eye drops. You may need help from another adult, especially with small children and babies. One of you can hold your child still and reassure them, while the other gives the drops.

- **For older children**, gently pull the lower lid out and squeeze the bottle gently so that one drop goes into the pocket that is formed.



- **In small children and babies**, place the drop into the inner corner of the eye. This is easier with the eye open, but the liquid will still drain on to the eye even with a closed eye if you can hold your child's head still for a few seconds.
- Hold the bottle as reasonably close to the eye as possible, without the tip touching your child's eye.



- After giving eye drops, your child should keep their eye closed for as long as they can (5 seconds if possible) so that the eye drop doesn't spill out.
- If you think the drop didn't go into the eye, you can repeat the process but do not try more than twice.
- Wash your hands again with soap and hot water.

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk



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The primary source for the information in this leaflet is the British National Formulary for Children. For details on any other sources used for this leaflet, please contact us through our website, www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk

We take great care to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct and up-to-date. However, medicines can be used in different ways for different patients. It is important that you ask the advice of your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about something. This leaflet is about the use of these medicines in the UK, and may not apply to other countries. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), the Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacists Group (NPPG), WellChild and the contributors and editors cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of information, omissions of information, or any actions that may be taken as a consequence of reading this leaflet.