

Atropine eye drops before refraction

The Eye Unit Patient Information

This leaflet is for patients who are coming to the Eye Department for refraction with Atropine eye drops.

What is refraction?

Refraction is a test to determine what strength glasses your child needs. An optometrist or ophthalmologist will measure the eye by holding up lenses and using a special light (refraction) will calculate the strength of glasses your child needs.

What is the benefit of using atropine eye drops before refraction?

Atropine sulphate eye drops enlarge the pupils of the eye and temporarily paralyse the muscles inside the eye so the doctor/optometrist can perform refraction.

Why does my child need atropine eye drops?

Atropine is used when your child's pupils fail to dilate sufficiently with Cyclopentolate drops which are normally used. This is because your child has particularly dark irides (the coloured part of the eye)

What are the risks of not using the drops?

If your child does not use the drops the refraction test cannot be performed.

When should I put the drops in?

You have an appointment for refraction at the Eye Department

on: at:

and will require:

Atropine Sulphate 1% preservative free eye drops: One drop to be used in each eye at night, for 2 nights before the appointment.

Please start the drops

on:

Do not use the drops on the day of the appointment.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the eye department on **0300 019 1515**. If you are calling between 8am-4pm choose option 4 for medical secretaries. If you are calling outside of these hours, choose option 5 for eye emergency

Are there any risks?

There are a few rare side effects of Atropine that you should look out for, if any of the following are noted please stop the use of atropine immediately and seek medical advice:

- Hot flushed appearance
- Dry mouth
- Sore red eye
- Rash
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Atropine is poisonous if it is swallowed or eaten. If you suspect this has occurred take your child to the nearest Accident and Emergency department.

How do I use the drops?

Always wash your hands before instilling any eye drops. You should put one drop into each eye for 2 evenings before the appointment. Pull the eyelids apart and put one drop in the eye being careful not to touch the surface of the eye with the applicator. If the drop misses the eye you can attempt a second drop, but never try more than twice. Wipe away any drops that get onto hands or face with a wet flannel. You may find it easier to put the drops in when your child is asleep.

The resultant blur from using atropine can last up to 7 days after the last instillation; the pupil may stay dilated for up to 14 days.

How do I store atropine eye drops?

Atropine should be stored out of reach of children, in a cool dry place and out of direct sunlight. Throw away each minim after use even if there is some solution left.

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