



**Orthoptic Department**  
**Atropine Occlusion**  
**Information for parents and carers**

Your child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Put drops in \_\_\_\_\_ eye \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_

**Why has my child been prescribed Atropine?**

Atropine drops may be used as an initial treatment of amblyopia (lazy eye) or when patching treatment is not working. The main aim of Atropine Occlusion is to blur the vision in the good eye (when viewing close objects) to promote the vision in the weaker eye.

**What are the effects of Atropine?**

Atropine has two effects when instilled in the eyes:

- It dilates the pupil (makes the black part of the eye larger).
- It relaxes the focusing of the eye which blurs the child's near (or close-up) vision.

The vision in the good eye will be blurred when looking at objects close up, forcing your child to use their weaker eye and helping to improve their vision. This encourages use of the eye with poorer vision for any near tasks such as reading, writing, drawing and computer work.

**How often should I instill the eye drops?**

The Atropine drops should be instilled \_\_\_\_\_ unless advised otherwise by your ophthalmologist. We advise using them in the morning for the first two doses to assess any side effects. After this the drops can be instilled whilst your child is asleep if this is preferred.

Your child may feel a little discomfort when the drops are initially instilled, although the drops do not sting.

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

You will notice the pupil of your child's eye enlarge.

**How long do the effects of the Atropine last?**

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

If your child is at school then please inform their teacher about the Atropine treatment. Your child may want to hold books closer and their handwriting may be less neat than usual.

### Are there any side effects?

- It will make the dilated eye sensitive to light so avoid bright light. Wearing a sun hat or sun glasses may help.
- If your child becomes hot and complains of a sore throat, becomes irritable or develops any of the following symptoms: a rash, headaches, nausea / vomiting, stop using the Atropine and seek medical advice immediately.

If your child needs to be seen by any other doctor or health professional during the treatment, it is important to inform them that Atropine drops are being used.

### How to store Atropine safely

Atropine is a muscle relaxant and is poisonous if eaten; therefore care must be taken with storage.

- Keep it out of reach of children and at room temperature.
- Do not use the Atropine beyond the expiry date.
- If your child accidentally swallows Atropine, encourage them to be sick and contact the nearest casualty department or your GP.

### Where do I get repeat Atropine prescriptions?

Atropine will be prescribed for your child by one of the doctors from the Eye Department.

### How often is my child seen?

Your child will be reviewed every two weeks, following commencement of Atropine. After eight weeks of using the Atropine drops, the drops will be stopped for four weeks. After this, the decision will be made, if it is necessary, to restart the Atropine.

### It is important that you:

- Do not continue using Atropine if you have missed an appointment as this may induce unwanted side effects.
- Tell your Ophthalmologist or Orthoptist if your child is taking any other medication.
- Do not use Atropine if your child suffers from heart problems or has a high fever.

### What if I miss an appointment?

You should re-arrange the appointment as soon as possible. The treatment must be carried out under strict supervision.

This fact sheet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment. This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.