

## Instillation of eye drops

While administering eye drops is common practice however, it can be difficult for a person to put their own eye drops into their eye\'. I have experienced the difficulty of seeing the older person who sometimes lives alone and requires eye drops to be inserted post operatively especially after cataract surgery.

It is not always possible to have a neighbour or relative available when drops are required, and therefore the patient has to be taught to do their own drops. This can be a challenge for the patient as they may have less than optimal fine motor skills, or other conditions that make the process frustrating and less than optimal.

**Reasons for using the correct method** include:

- To limit drug wastage
- To get maximum advantage of the drug's effect from each drop
- To prevent additional drug being spilled onto the eyelid thus the possibility for skin allergy

### Instructions

The doctor will give specific instructions on when to take the eye drops, and how many drops to administer. Most times only require one drop is administered. If more are required with each dose, you should wait 3-minutes before administering the second drop so that it doesn't leak out on your cheek or eyelid.

***Do not use more drops than is prescribed by your doctor because you have lost some of the dose, as the effect of the extra drug on your system can be toxic.***

### Step 1. Eye Drop Bottle

- ✓ Remove Eye Drops from the fridge 5 minutes before you are due to administer them and leave them in a cool place.
- ✓ Check the expiry date on the eye drop bottle
- ✓ Discard if out of date and get a new bottle
- ✓ Do not use eye drops from a bottle that has been opened for one month
- ✓ Check the name on the bottle is correct



**Your Name**

**Your Drug**

**Is it due now?**

**Is the drug still within the use by date?**

**Have you had a reaction to this drug in the past? If yes speak with your doctor or chemist before using the drops**

## Step 2 Hand washing precautions and prevention of infection



- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water
- Ensure you place used paper towel or tissues in the bin after use

## Step 3 Remove any contact lenses and have tissues handy

### Step 4 One hand techniques

Have head in a backward tilt position, and look upward until after the drug has been administered.

Be sure not to touch the eye with the bottle dropper as it can introduce infection, and/or scratch the eye. If your hand is shaking, rest your hand on your face to help steady your hand. Handle the bottle cap with care so that infection does not get into the lid when it is off the bottle



<http://www.glaucoma.org/treatment/eyedrop-tips.php>

### **Remember to shake the bottle before use**

Some people can hold their eye open while administering the drop, and using one hand on the dropper bottle can administer one drop into the eye

- ✓ Only administer only one drop at this time
- ✓ Keep your head in a back tilted position and close eye so the drug can be absorbed about one to two minutes
- ✓ If another drop is required, wait 3 minutes then administer the second drop
- ✓ Repeat if drops are required in both eyes
- ✓ Wait 5 minutes if another drug has to be administered into your eye\



1 hand technique (<http://www.glaucoma.org/treatment/eyedrop-tips.php>)



2 hand technique Steiner, (2008)

### **2 hand techniques**

- ✓ Some people hold down the bottom eyelid with one hand, and pick up the drop bottle and can squeeze one drop into the lower eyelid area
- ✓ Only administer only one drop at this time
- ✓ Keep your head in a back tilted position and close eye so the drug can be absorbed about one to two minutes
- ✓ If another drop is required, wait 3 minutes then administer the second drop
- ✓ Repeat if drops are required in both eyes
- ✓ Wait 5 minutes if another drug has to be administered into your eye\

**Step 5 After administration of eye drops**

- ✓ Use tissue to gently pat eye to remove excess leakage
- ✓ **Do Not Rub your EYES**
- ✓ Place used tissues in bin
- ✓ Wash Hands
- ✓ Place eye drop bottle in fridge until next application

**Literature suggests the barriers to compliance with administration of eye drops include:**

- ✓ Inability to direct the bottle over the eye appropriately, resulting in missing drops
- ✓ Difficulty squeezing the bottle
- ✓ Inability to read the bottle labels or to identify the bottle
- ✓ Inability to self-administer
- ✓ Lack the manual dexterity to administer their own eye drops
- ✓ Difficulty getting one drop out
- ✓ Short recovery period, people released home early without appropriate education on how to administer
- ✓ Forgetfulness

**References**

Steiner, M.(2008) Correct use of eye drops. *Aust Prescriber*. 37:1617  
<http://www.glaucoma.org/treatment/eyedrop-tips.php>  
<http://www.uniteforsight.org/community-eye-health-course/module5>