

## **Pupil-dilating eye drops/ointments ('Mydriatics')**

Examples: Atropine, Mydrilate® (Cyclopentolate), Homatropine, Mydriacyl® (Tropicamide), Phenylephrine

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### **How do they work?**

These eye drops or ointments relax the muscles of the eye so as to widen (dilate) the pupil, which is the central black area in the middle of the iris, the coloured part of the eye. These medicines also relax the focusing muscles of the eye, which means that most children will also experience blurred vision.

### **What should I tell the pharmacist or doctor?**

Tell the pharmacist and doctor if your child is allergic to any medication or if your child has high blood pressure or a heart condition.

### **Why are they used?**

These drops help the doctor examine the back of the eye. Dilating the pupil can also help to reduce inflammation and discomfort in the eye after surgery or injury, or treat inflammation which occurs in certain conditions. They can also be used to help treat amblyopia ('lazy' eye).

### **How long do the effects last?**

Mydriacyl® (Tropicamide), Mydrilate® (Cyclopentolate) and Phenylephrine work for a few hours. They are used one to four times a day at home.

The effects of Atropine and Homatropine last longer, so they are usually used once or twice a day.

### **How do you use these drops/ointments?**

Before giving either drops or ointment, it is important to wash and dry your hands.

*Eye drops:* You only need to place one drop in the eye. If you need to give more than one type of eye drop, leave at least five minutes between applying each type of medicine.

*Eye ointment:* Pull down the lower lid and squeeze about 1/2 a centimetre (1/4 of an inch) of ointment into each eye. You need to take care not to touch the eye with the end of the tube.

*Contact lenses:* should be removed before putting in eye drops. Wait for 15 minutes before putting the contact lenses back in the eye. Check with the pharmacist that the eye drops or ointment are safe to use with contact lenses.

### **What are the main side effects?**

These drops can cause temporary stinging and blurred vision. Blurred vision can last for hours or even days depending on the type of eye drop. The eyes might also be more sensitive to bright light. Occasionally, the drops can cause a sore red eye or eyelids.

Very rarely, these drops or ointments can cause a rapid heart beat, dry mouth, high temperature, constipation, or difficulty in passing urine. This can occur when small amounts of the medicine are absorbed into the body from the eyes. If your child experiences symptoms that you think could be due to the drops, contact your pharmacist or doctor.

### **How do you store these drops/ointments?**

Most eye drops/ointments can be stored at room temperature and should be thrown away four weeks after you open them. Some need to be stored in a fridge and some need to be thrown away after one week. Other single-dose preparations are discarded after single use. Check with your pharmacist when you need to discard the medication.

Do not use medicines after the expiry date written on the packaging.

### **Need more information?**

Please refer to the packaging and product leaflet for further information or contact the pharmacy department on: 020 7566 2362

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**  
City Road, London EC1V 2PD  
Ph: 020 7253 3411 [www.moorfields.nhs.uk](http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk)

**Moorfields Direct telephone helpline: 020 7566 2345**

**Monday to Friday 09.00 to 16.30 for further information and advice.**