Paediatric information: medicines

Beta-blocker eye drops

Beta-blocker eye drops
Examples: Timolol, Betagan® (Levobunolol), Betoptic® (Betaxolol), Tiopex® (Timolol), Timoptol LA® (Timolol)

How do beta-blockers work?
Beta-blockers help to lower the pressure inside the eye. They do this by reducing the amount of fluid (called aqueous humour) made inside the eye.

What should I tell the pharmacist or doctor?
Tell the pharmacist and doctor if your child has asthma or a heart condition, as beta-blockers may not be suitable, or if your child is known to be allergic to any medication.

How to give eye drops
Before giving drops it is important to wash and dry your hands.

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

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

How often should I give beta-blocker eye drops?
These drops are either used once or twice daily. Normal Timolol Levobunolol (Betagan®) and Betaxolol (Betoptic®) eye drops are used twice daily. Timolol also comes in a gel form called Timoptol LA® or Tiopex® which are used only once daily in the morning.

What are the main side effects?
Mild side effects: Eye drops can cause mild stinging, blurred sight, or a funny taste in the mouth, just after putting them in.
Other side effects: These drops can cause worsening of asthma and breathing difficulties. Beta-blockers can also cause side effects in children with heart problems. Rarely, beta-blocker drops can cause an allergic reaction. The signs of an allergic reaction can include: severe redness, swelling and irritation of the eye or eyelids, rash, swelling of the lips or face, or difficulty with breathing.

If your child experiences symptoms that you think may be due to the drops, speak to your pharmacist or doctor.

How do you store these drops?
Most eye drops can be stored at room temperature. They should be thrown away four weeks after you open them. Single use eye drops should be discarded after being used once only. 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

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