

Atropine Ophthalmic

Why is this medication prescribed?

Ophthalmic atropine is used before eye examinations to dilate (open) the pupil, the black part of the eye through which you see. It is also used to relieve pain caused by swelling and inflammation of the eye. Or other conditions determined by your doctor.

How should this medicine be used?

Atropine comes as a solution (liquid) to instill in the eyes and an eye ointment to apply to the eyes. The drops are usually instilled two to four times a day. The ointment is usually applied one to three times a day. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Use atropine exactly as directed. Do not use more or less of it or use it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

To instill the eye drops, follow these steps:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Check the dropper tip to make sure that it is not chipped or cracked.
3. Avoid touching the dropper tip against your eye or anything else; eye drops and droppers must be kept clean.
4. While tilting your head back, pull down the lower lid of your eye with your index finger to form a pocket.
5. Hold the dropper (tip down) with the other hand, as close to the eye as possible without touching it.
6. Brace the remaining fingers of that hand against your face.
7. While looking up, gently squeeze the dropper so that a single drop falls into the pocket made by the lower eyelid. Remove your index finger from the lower eyelid.
8. Close your eye for 2 to 3 minutes and tip your head down as though looking at the floor. Try not to blink or squeeze your eyelids.
9. Place a finger on the tear duct and apply gentle pressure for 2-3 minutes.
10. Wipe any excess liquid from your face with a tissue.
11. If you are to use more than one drop in the same eye, wait at least 5 minutes before instilling the next drop.

12. Replace and tighten the cap on the dropper bottle. Do not wipe or rinse the dropper tip.
13. Wash your hands to remove any medication.

Other uses for this medicine

This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before using atropine eye drops or eye ointment,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to atropine, belladonna, or any other drugs.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially antihistamines, cough and cold medicines, and vitamins.
- tell your doctor if you have glaucoma.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while using atropine, call your doctor immediately.
- you should know that your vision may be blurred during your treatment with atropine ophthalmic ointment. Avoid rubbing your eyes even if your vision is blurred. Do not drive a car or operate machinery if you are unable to see clearly.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Instill the eye drops or apply the eye ointment as soon as you remember the missed dose. . However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not instill or apply a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Atropine may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- eye irritation and redness
- swelling of the eyelids
- sensitivity to bright light
- dry mouth

- red or dry skin
- blurred vision

Some side effects may be serious. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- fever
- irritability
- fast pulse
- irregular heartbeat
- mental confusion
- difficulty urinating

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online (<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>) or by phone (1-800-332-1088).

What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom).

Unneeded medications should be disposed of in special ways to ensure that pets, children, and other people cannot consume them. However, you should not flush this medication down the toilet. Instead, the best way to dispose of your medication is through a medicine take-back program. Talk to your pharmacist or contact your local garbage/recycling department to learn about take-back programs in your community. See the FDA's Safe Disposal of Medicines website (<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p>) for more information if you do not have access to a take-back program.

It is important to keep all medication out of sight and reach of children as many containers (such as weekly pill minders and those for eye drops, creams, patches, and inhalers) are not child-resistant and young children can open them easily. To protect young children from poisoning, always lock safety caps and immediately place the medication in a safe location – one that is up and away and out of their sight and reach. <http://www.upandaway.org>

What other information should I know?

Keep all appointments with your doctor. Your doctor will order certain eye tests to check your response to atropine eye drops or ointment.

Do not let anyone else use your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.