

to teachers that they may have difficulty with close work. Atropine works for much longer than the Cyclopentolate drops used in the clinic, and pupils may stay dilated for a week after the last dose.

A very small number of children react to the Atropine eye drops. These side effects settle down a day or so after stopping the drops and can include:

Skin irritation	Puffy eyelids
Red eyes	Flushed
Fever	Palpitations (increase in heart rate)
Irritable	Dry mouth

It is rare to get any of these side effects on a once a day dosage, they are more common if the prescribed dose is exceeded. If you think your child is experiencing any problems from the Atropine drops, stop using them and consult your GP.

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Royal Eye Unit

Atropine Eye Drops And Children

Information Sheet

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ATROPINE DROPS AND CHILDREN

Atropine is used in children for two main reasons:

1. Refraction
2. Amblyopia (lazy eye) treatment

Atropine Refraction

Part of the assessment of your child's eyes involves looking into the inside of the eyes and doing a glasses test (refraction)

In order for the doctor to be able to see inside the eye the pupil has to be made bigger (dilated) and to have an accurate refraction the focussing muscle of the eye (ciliary muscle) has to be relaxed.

The eye drop we commonly use in the clinic to dilate the pupil and relax the focussing muscle is called Cyclopentolate. In some children (usually those with very dark eyes), these drops do not work well enough to do an accurate test.

In this circumstance we prescribe Atropine 1% drops to relax the ciliary muscle and dilate the pupil. The Atropine is put into both eyes once a day for 3 days running up to the next appointment, and on the day of the appointment.

Appointment day	Days to use eye drops		
Monday	Fri	Sat	Sun
Tuesday	Sat	Sun	Mon
Wednesday	Sun	Mon	Tues
Thursday	Mon	Tues	Wed
Friday	Tues	Wed	Thurs

Atropine Treatment in Amblyopia

Some children with squints, droopy eyelids, glasses requirement or other eye problems develop a lazy eye (Amblyopia). For most children with amblyopia the standard treatment is patching, also known as occlusion (covering the better eye with a patch to make the brain use the lazy eye.)

Some children do not respond to patching treatment and occasionally blurring the good eye with 1% Atropine drops two times a week can be used as an alternative treatment. Atropine will dilate the pupil and blur the vision for up to two weeks after it is instilled into the eye.

Effects of Atropine

While the pupils are dilated your child will be a little more light sensitive than usual and they may have quite blurred vision, more noticeable for close activities. Wearing sun hats and sun glasses in bright weather may be beneficial. Explain