Patient Education

How to put in your eye drops

Your nursing staff created this information to show you a way to put in eye drops.

By following these directions, you will keep this medication clean and prevent eye infections.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water. Dry your hands with a clean towel.

Check and see if your eyes have crusting or drainage. If they do, close your eyes and gently wash or wipe the outside of your eyelids with a clean wet cotton ball.
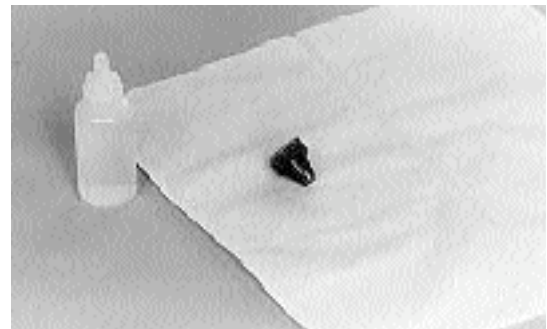
2. Shake the eye drops container gently.

   Special note: Be sure to use only the eye drops prescribed for you. Always check the container to be sure that it is the right drug, right number of drops, and the correct schedule (when should put in your drops).

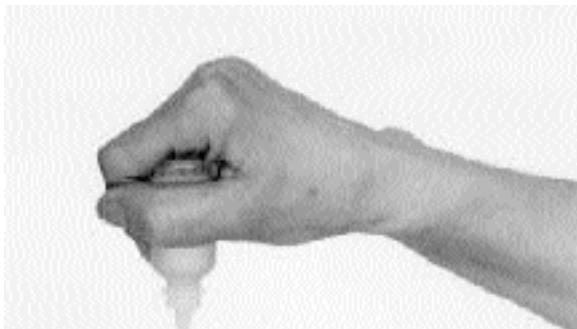*Do not put any medication into your eyes unless the label says "ophthalmic."*

3. Remove the cap of the eye drop bottle. Place the dropper cap on its side, and rest it on a clean tissue.

4. Do not touch the dropper tip with your hand or any object. Eye drops must stay clean.

5. Quickly turn the bottle upside down.

6. Place the back of your thumb against your forehead, above the eye receiving the drop.

7. Tilt your head backward with both eyes open, and look at a point on the ceiling.

8. Pull your lower lid down gently to form a pocket for the drop.

Position the tip of the eye drop bottle so that it does not come closer than ¾ inch above your lower lid.

9. Squeeze the bottle lightly to allow the drop to fall into the pocket.

10. Close your eyes without squeezing them. Keep your eyes closed, and gently blot them with a clean tissue.

With your eyes closed, gently press on the inner part of your eye for 30 seconds. This keeps the medication in contact with the eye longer.

11. Replace the cap on the eye drop bottle.

Do not leave eye drops in direct sunlight. Some eye drops need to be kept refrigerated, but most, do not. Check with your pharmacist about which eye drops should stay cool.

Helpful Tips

▶ If you have never been taught how to give yourself eye drops or you do not remember, ask your nurse or doctor to teach you. It's also a good idea for them to watch you put in your eye drops to make sure you're doing it right.

▶ Be sure to ask your doctor and nurse why you need the eye drops, what side effects you should expect, and when you should contact your doctor.

▶ Do not wear contact lenses while using eye drops or ointments unless your physician instructs you to do so.

▶ If your doctor has ordered eye drops and eye ointment, put in the eye drops before the ointment.

▶ Make sure you use the correct eye drops—ask for help if you need it.

▶ Avoid touching the eye dropper with your fingers.

▶ Keep the eye dropper from touching your eye, lashes, or eyelid.

▶ Turn the bottle upside-down quickly to keep drops from leaking out.

▶ When you give yourself eye drops, you may find it easier to do in front of a mirror or lying flat on your back.

▶ Point your fingernail away from your eye to avoid accidentally scratching your cornea or eye.

▶ Open both eyes and focus on the ceiling to avoid blinking.

▶ Avoid squeezing or blinking your eyes after putting in drops.

▶ To blot excess eye drops from the eyes, use a clean, separate tissue for each eye.

▶ Wait at least 5 minutes between putting in each drop.

▶ Check the bottle's expiration date— throw it away if it is outdated.