

Patient information factsheet

Cyclopentolate eye drops for children

We have given you this factsheet because your child has an appointment for a sight test and will be given cyclopentolate eye drops as part of this test. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you or your child has any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

It is important that you let the orthoptist, doctor or optometrist (optician) performing the sight test know if your child is allergic to any medication, or if they have high blood pressure or a heart condition. Cyclopentolate eye drops may not be suitable for them.

What are cyclopentolate eye drops?

Cyclopentolate is a medication that comes in the form of eye drops and is routinely used before eye examinations. The eye drops allow medical professionals to examine children's eyes to see if glasses are needed and if their eyes are healthy.

How do the eye drops work?

The eye drops make it easier for your child's eyes to be examined. They work by temporarily:

- enlarging (dilating) your child's pupils (the black area in the centre of the eye)
- relaxing the focusing muscles of your child's eyes (this will make their vision blurry)

How long do the effects last?

The eye drops usually take 20 to 40 minutes to work. The eye drops vary in their effect and can last up to 36 hours.

If your child has brown eyes

The eye drops may take slightly longer to work because of your child's darker eye pigmentation. If this is the case, we may give them two drops of cyclopentolate, or we may use a second eye drop called phenylephrine (2.5% strength) to help dilate their pupils.

Are there any side effects?

Common side effects include:

- a stinging sensation when the drops are put in (this usually wears off after a couple of minutes)
- blurred vision (especially for close work)
- a sensitivity to bright light while the pupils are large (wearing a hat or sunglasses may help)

Rare side effects include:

- hot flushes for the first hour after the drops are put in
- a rapid heartbeat
- a dry mouth
- a high temperature
- difficulty passing urine (weeing)

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If you have any concerns about your child while you're in the eye clinic, please let a member of staff know.

If you have any concerns about your child after leaving the eye clinic, please contact the orthoptic department or eye casualty using the telephone numbers below.

If your child needs to see a doctor while their pupils are still large, for example if they had an accident, you should let the doctor know that they have had dilating eye drops.

Can my child return to school or nursery today?

Your child can go back to school or nursery after having eye drops, but they will temporarily have blurred vision and be sensitive to light. Please make sure that your child's teacher or play leader knows about the eye drops, so they are able to provide additional support and supervision if needed. Your child should not take part in sports and games until their vision is completely clear.

Contact us

Orthoptic department

Telephone: **023 8120 4789** (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4pm, Friday)

Eye casualty

Telephone: **023 8120 6592**

Useful links

www.squintclinic.com

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**