

Advice after your child has received dilating eye drops

This leaflet explains more about dilating eye drops for children. If you have any further questions, please speak to a specialist caring for your child.

Why do we need to use drops?

It is often necessary to dilate (make bigger) your child's pupils when he/she comes to the eye clinic, and we can use eye drops to do this. Using eye drops will enable us to examine the back of your child's eyes and will also help us to check whether there is any refractive error (need for glasses).

Will the drops hurt my child?

The drops can sting a little when they go in, however, the process is not painful for your child. The orthoptists and other health professionals are very experienced in using eye drops on children's eyes, and they have many different techniques to minimise discomfort and ensure that the drops are applied effectively.

How long do the drops last?

It usually takes around half an hour for the drops to dilate the pupils fully, however, if your child's eyes are particularly dark, the process can take up to an hour. The effects of the drops usually last between 4-6 hours but can be up to 24 hours.

What effect will the drops have on my child's vision?

The drops can cause some blurring of your child's vision, and make him/her a little more sensitive to the light. It is sensible for your child to wear a cap or hat with a brim once the drops have gone in, as this will help to keep bright sunlight off their face.

After their appointment, your child may return to school, however, you should tell the teacher that your child may have some difficulty reading for a couple of hours.

How long before the drops wear off?

The eye drops will wear off in two stages. First, the ability to focus returns (around 4-6 hours after the drops are put in) and then the pupil size returns to normal. Usually, the dilated pupils will return to normal later that day, however, it should not be a cause for concern if the pupils remain dilated until the next day.

Useful sources of information

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about dilating drops in children, please contact the orthoptists on **020 7188 4299** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk

w: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership