

Glaucoma

Frequently Asked Questions

Tick chart to help you remember your drops

I need to reorder my drops on:

	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								
Sunday								

Drops and Operations

Do I need to use my drops the day of my appointment?

Yes please, this allows us an accurate measurement of the pressure in your eye to decide if the treatment is being effective.

Will putting in extra drops help my pressures in my eyes more?

No, in fact with some treatments this can have the opposite effect. It also may increase any side effects from the drops.

How long do drops last for in the bottle?

If a bottle is not opened and stored in a cool dark place then they will last until the manufacturers' expiry date on the bottle. When the bottle has

been opened then they will last 28 days, unless you are told differently by the Pharmacist/Dr/ Glaucoma Practitioner.

Do I need to keep them in the fridge?

Unopened bottles should/can be stored in the fridge, but NEVER in the freezer. Check with the pharmacist regarding this when you collect your prescription. Once opened then they can be stored in a suitable place you are going to remember to use them, e.g. on the bedside table. However, some people find it useful to store their drops in the fridge so they can feel the cold drop going into the eye, helping them know they have put them in properly.

What will happen if I forget my drops?

The pressure in the eye will rise again and possibly start to cause damage to the optic nerve at the back of the eye. Try to put the drops in as soon as you remember unless it is very close to the next dose.

Can I take other medication with my drops?

Yes, but make sure the Dr or Pharmacist knows you have glaucoma as some medications are not suitable.

Do I need to continue my drops if I go into hospital?

Yes, it important to keep using the drops to make sure the pressure in the eye remains reduced. Please make sure that the Drs and nursing staff are aware you are on treatment.

Can I still safely get pregnant if I am on drops?

It is important that your GP/Glaucoma Dr is aware that you are trying to or are pregnant as some drops are not recommended in pregnancy.

What if drops spill out of my eye onto my face when I put them in?

If you feel that none of the drop went into the eye try again. If however it is overspill then just wipe the excess away with a clean tissue as it sometimes can cause the skin to become sore. If this happens a mild moisturiser should help.

How can I tell if the drops have gone in?

Some people do find this difficult, it can be useful to store the drops in the fridge so when you are put in you feel the cold drop in your eye. If you are still unsure it will not do any harm to put another drop in immediately, as any excess will simply overspill or be drained away in your tears.

If I have an operation for my glaucoma, will I still need to use drops to control the pressure in my eye?

Immediately after surgery you will stop your glaucoma drops in the operated eye (please continue in the other eye if already used) and will be given other drops to use in the weeks or months following surgery. In the longer term most patients' eye pressures are controlled without glaucoma drops following surgery although some patients do continue to need drops and the proportion of patients needing to restart drops does increase as time passes.

How long will I need off work if I have an operation for my glaucoma?

This can vary from patient to patient depending on the operation and the type of work done. Manual workers may require a few months off heavy work whereas an office worker may be able to return within a few weeks. Please discuss this with the glaucoma Dr prior to surgery.

Contact Lenses and Glasses

Will glasses help my glaucoma?

No, but they may be necessary with your sight generally.

Can I still wear my contact lenses if I use drops?

Yes but do not put drops in whilst wearing the lenses as this may restrict the uptake of the medication in the drop and may damage the contact lens.

Exercise and Hobbies

Am I allowed to still do Yoga and Pilates?

Yes but avoid moves that involve the head being lower than the body for any length of time as this can raise the pressure in the eyes.

Can I still play wind instruments?

If you play regularly and for long periods of time this may affect your eye pressure. It would be best to speak to the glaucoma Drs or Practitioners regarding your specific condition.

Can I still play sport?

Yes, but check with the glaucoma Drs or Practitioners if the sport involves straining such as weight lifting. If you have had glaucoma surgery special eye protection may be required.

Everyday Living

Can I still drive?

The DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) are responsible for deciding if a person is medically fit to drive and this includes vision. If you have glaucoma that affects both of your eyes you are legally obliged to inform the DVLA. They may send you for further assessments to decide if you are suitable to drive. For the most up to date information regarding this matter please speak to the medical section of the DVLA or visit their website.

Will strong sunlight affect my glaucoma?

No, this will not affect your glaucoma but sunglasses may make your eyes more comfortable.

Can I still drink alcohol?

Yes, this will not affect your glaucoma, but remember be drink aware.

Do I need to avoid or eat certain foods?

No, just a balanced diet.

Am I going to go blind?

Although glaucoma can result in blindness this is relatively unusual in western countries assuming it is diagnosed in the early stages, the condition responds to treatment and the patient both adheres to treatment and has regular check-ups.

For a more individualised risk assessment of developing severe visual problems from your glaucoma please ask the glaucoma Dr or practitioner.

If I start new tablets or medicine will I need to let the glaucoma Dr or practitioners know?

Yes please, as some medicine can influence the pressures in your eyes. Unless you have any specific concerns, this can be done at your next routine appointment.

How often should I see the glaucoma Dr or practitioner?

This will depend if your condition is stable or not.

If not stable you will be seen more frequently either by the Dr or Practitioner. If stable, depending on your condition you should be seen either every six, twelve or eighteen months. We would recommend keeping track of your appointments and if they are delayed then please ring the glaucoma department to chase it.

Do I still need to see the Optician?

Yes, you should still attend regular appointments to have your vision checked.

Do I still need to have my eyes photographed for my diabetes?

Yes, do continue to have these done as they look a slightly different area of the eye and our photographs are not accessed by the diabetic centre.

If you have any other questions, do ask the glaucoma Dr or Practitioner.

Contact number:

Glaucoma Unit Heavitree Hospital:

01392 406045

Further useful information sites:

Glaucoma UK

+44 (0)1233 64 81 70

Monday – Friday 9:30am – 5:00pm

<https://glaucoma.uk/>

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

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