Sodium hyaluronate for dry eyes

Sodium hyaluronate eye drops act as artificial tears. They make dry eyes feel more comfortable.

You can use the drops as often as required.

If your vision becomes blurred for a short while after using the drops, do not drive until you can see clearly again.

About sodium hyaluronate eye drops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of medicine</th>
<th>Eye lubricant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used for</td>
<td>Dry eyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Also called</td>
<td>Artelac Splash®, Artelac Rebalance®, Blink Intensive®, Clinitas®, Evolve HA®; Hyabak®, Hyycosan®, Hydratril®, Hyla-Care®, Hyla-Forte®, Hylotears®, Leukodex®, Lumecare® Sodium Hyaluronate; Lubristil®, Ocusoft®, Optive Fusion®, Oxyal®, Thelazol Duo®, Vismed®, VisuKare®, Xaillin HA®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available as</td>
<td>Eye drops and single-use units</td>
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Sodium hyaluronate eye drops are also known as 'artificial tears'. They are used to relieve eye dryness and soreness. They moisten, soothe and lubricate the surface of your eye, making it feel more comfortable.

There are several different brands of eye drops that contain sodium hyaluronate as an ingredient. Many of these are listed in the table above. You may be prescribed the drops by a doctor, or you can buy them without a prescription at a pharmacy.

Before using sodium hyaluronate

To make sure this is the right treatment for you, before you start using the eye drops it is important that your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you wear soft contact lenses.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a preservative in eye drops.

How to use sodium hyaluronate eye drops

1. Wash your hands well before you use the drops.
2. Remove the cap from the bottle (or the tip of the unit if you are using a single-use unit).
3. Tilt your head back a little and pull the lower lid of your eye downwards to form a pocket.
4. Hold the bottle (or single-use unit) upside down near to your eye. Try not to touch your eye as you do this.
5. Apply enough pressure to release one drop into your eye. Only use a second drop if the first drop missed going into your eye.
6. Close your eye for a minute or two, and press gently on the side of your nose where the corner of your eye meets your nose. This helps to stop the drop from draining away and keeps it in your eye.
7. Repeat the process in your other eye if you have been told to use the drops in both eyes.
8. Replace the cap (or if you are using a single-use dose unit, throw the used unit away).

Getting the most from your treatment

- Before you start using the eye drops, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet supplied with the pack. It will give you more information about using the drops and will provide a full list of any side-effects which you may experience.
- Use one drop into the eye (or eyes) affected by dryness. Many people find it is sufficient to use the drops three or four times a day, but you can use the drops as often as you need to if your eyes are very dry. If the drops have been prescribed for you, then follow the directions given by your doctor.
- Please take care that the dropper doesn't touch your eye, your fingers, or any other surface. This could contaminate the drops left in the bottle.
If you forget to use the drops at your 'usual' time, do not worry, just put them in when you remember. Do not 'double up' the number of drops you use to make up for forgetting to use them.

When first put in, eye drops may cause blurred vision. This should quickly clear. Make sure you can see clearly again before you drive, or before you use tools or machines.

If you are using any other eye drops or ointments, leave about ten minutes between applying each one. It is usually recommended that you use the sodium hyaluronate drops last. This is so that the drops stay in contact with your eye and lubricate it for as long as possible.

Do not wear soft contact lenses while you are using the drops unless your doctor or pharmacist has advised you otherwise. This is because there is a preservative in bottles of eye drops which can affect soft contact lenses. There is no preservative in the single-use units.

If your symptoms do not improve within a few days, see your doctor for advice.

Can sodium hyaluronate eye drops cause problems?
The eye drops can occasionally cause mild eye irritation, but this usually soon passes and not everyone will experience it. If you experience any other eye problems, especially if you think they may be due to the drops, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

How to store sodium hyaluronate eye drops
- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- Always check the expiry date on the label, and for how long you can use the drops once the container has been opened. Many eye drops only keep for four weeks once the container has been opened, in order to reduce the risk of eye infections.
- Single-dose units should be used immediately the unit is opened. Do not store or re-use opened units for subsequent doses. This is because the units do not contain any preservative.

Important information about all medicines

Make sure that the person supplying this medicine knows about any other medicines that you are using. This includes medicines you buy and herbal and homeopathic medicines.

If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are using.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

If you suspect that someone might have swallowed some of this medicine, contact your local accident and emergency department for advice.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references

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Author: Michael Stewart
Peer Reviewer: Sid Dajani
Document ID: 13866 (v3)
Last Checked: 23/01/2018
Next Review: 22/01/2021

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