

## Patient information

# How to Use Your Fluorouracil 1% Eye Drops

## St Paul's Eye Department

You have been prescribed Fluorouracil 1 % eye drops to treat your eye condition. Fluorouracil 1 % is a cytotoxic agent, which can be harmful if misused. It is therefore important that you handle your drops with care, using them only as prescribed.

### How often should I use my eye drops?

One drop should be put into your affected eye four times daily (e.g. 7am, 12pm, 5pm, 10pm) for four days out of every four weeks for four months.

The drops will be supplied to you once every four weeks (i.e. one-week at a time) from the hospital pharmacy because they do not contain any preservative.

The doctor will discuss the length of treatment with you. Usually, a four-day course of treatment at four weekly intervals will be repeated four times, but the doctor will examine your eye every four weeks and if you have any problems or reactions to the drops, the treatment will be reduced down.

You will be given a supply of disposable gloves. A special container will also be provided to safely discard your used bottles, tops and droppers etc. into. New gloves should be used each time you handle the drops. The used gloves and all other waste (i.e. any tissues used to wipe the eye after instilling the drops) should also be deposited into the container provided.

On completion of treatment, the container should be sealed and returned to the hospital pharmacy for safe disposal (either at your home hospital or when you return to Liverpool).

Should you need to use other drops at the same time of day, please leave at least five minutes between them to prevent one drop from diluting the other.

### **How do I use my eye drops?**

- Make sure you have a clean tissue available for use and that your special container is to hand.
- You could also protect your skin before instillation of the drops by applying a light covering of a white petroleum jelly ointment (such as Vaseline) to your cheek. Wash your hands thoroughly after use.
- Wash and dry your hands, then put on a fresh pair of disposable gloves.
- Remove the dropper cap from the container. Gently pull down the lower eyelid of the eye being treated until a small pocket forms between your eyelid and the eyeball. Using the dropper, put one drop into this pocket.
- Replace the dropper cap and close the drops bottle without delay.
- If any drops spill onto your cheek, you should immediately wipe them away with a tissue which should be discarded using the special container, then wash the affected area with warm water and soap.

### **Are there any side effects from the treatment?**

The drops may sting at first and usually cause the eye to become a little inflamed and sensitive. If the stinging or inflammation becomes severe you should seek advice from the doctor.

Fluorouracil 1 % can cause an increased sensitivity to sunlight. You should avoid exposure to strong sunlight whilst using the drops.

Some patients may experience rare side effects from the drops that could cause the upper eye lid to droop (Ptosis). This may require surgery to realign the lid.

### **Are there any alternative treatments available?**

There may be other treatments available and the doctor will have discussed these with you. If you feel that you need any further information please feel free to ask your doctor or specialist ocular oncology nurse (your key worker).

### **What will happen if I don't have any treatment?**

Your tumour may continue to grow or recur. This might make treatment more difficult and could make the eye painful. There may be an increased risk of tumour spread out of the eye and to other parts of the body.

### **Is there anything else I should know?**

Remember that the eye drops have been prescribed for you only and you must never let anyone else use them. Do store the drops in the fridge.

The drops can be toxic if used incorrectly so please ensure that they are stored in a safe place out of the reach of children.

**Handling of drops is not recommended during pregnancy. Care should be taken if there is any risk of pregnancy or if breastfeeding.**

**Both men and women should use birth control methods during and for three months following treatment with Fluorouracil 1 % eye drops.**

## **Feedback**

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

## **Further Information**

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