

PHARMACY DRUG INFORMATION

Medications to Treat Glaucoma



What is Glaucoma?

- Glaucoma is a chronic disease where the nerve(s) of the eye is progressively being damaged.
- It is usually accompanied by raised pressure in your eyeball. This results in a gradual vision loss and may lead to blindness if left untreated.

What are the Medications Used to Treat Glaucoma?

- Damage caused by glaucoma cannot be reversed. However, the disease progression can be controlled through medication and regular check-ups.
- Depending on your condition, options for treatment may include eye drops, laser treatment or surgery.
- There are several eye drops with different modes of action available to treat glaucoma.

Medication Class	Medication Name
Beta blockers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timolol 0.25% (Timabak®) • Timolol 0.5%
Adrenergic agonists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brimonidine (Alphagan-P®)
Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brinzolamide (Azopt®)
Parasympathetic agonists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilocarpine
Prostaglandin analogues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latanoprost (Xalatan®) • Bimatoprost (Lumigan®) • Travoprost (Travatan®) • Tafluprost (Taflotan-S®)
Combination products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latanoprost and Timolol (Xalacom®) • Brinzolamide and Brimonidine (SIMBRINZA®) • Tafluprost and Timolol (Tapcom-S®)

How do the Medications Work?

Medication Class	Mode of Action
Beta blockers	Reduce the rate of production of fluid in the eye
Adrenergic agonists	Reduce production of fluid in the eye
Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitor	
Parasympathetic agonists	Increase drainage of fluid in the eye
Prostaglandin analogues	
Combination products	

How are the Medications Administered?

You should always apply your eye drop (number of drops and frequency) as instructed by your doctor.

The correct way of applying your eye drops is:

1. Wash your hands before and after use.
2. Read the instructions on the label carefully.
3. Shake the bottle gently before use (for eye suspension only).
4. Remove the seal for a new bottle.
5. Sit with your head tilted backward and look upward.
6. Gently pull down the lower eyelid to form a pocket.
7. Hold the bottle with the application tip as close to the eye as possible. Avoid touching the eye with the dropper.
8. Apply one drop into the affected eye.
9. Gently depress the inner corner of your eye with your finger for one minute to keep the medication in your eye.
10. Close the eye, but do not rub it. Wipe off any excess drops around the eye with a clean tissue.

If you miss a dose, administer the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, administer only the usual dose. Never administer a double dosage to make up for the missed dose.

Can the Medications be Administered With Other Medications?

- If you have to apply two different types of eye drops at the same time, apply the second eye drop 5 minutes after applying the first.
- Always apply eye drops first, followed by eye suspensions, eye gels or eye ointments.
- It is important that you inform the doctor, pharmacist or nurse about other medications – including over-the-counter medications, supplements and traditional/herbal remedies – that you are currently taking, as they may affect the way you benefit from your glaucoma medications.

What are the Important Side Effects?

- Medications prescribed by your doctor should be beneficial for your condition, although they may result in some side effects.

Medication Class	Side Effects
Beta blockers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritation and stinging on instillation, burning, pain, red eyes or dry eyes • This drug may cause an asthma attack. Do inform your doctor if you have asthma
Adrenergic agonists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritation, stinging, redness, blurred vision and itchiness
Parasympathetic agonists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burning, itching, blurred vision, small pupil. Be careful when driving, doing tasks at night or doing tasks which require clear vision
Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional stinging, allergic reactions, itch, bitter taste
Combination products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to individual medication

Prostaglandin analogues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local stinging, irritation, redness of the eye • Allergic reactions • May cause brown discolouration of the iris and stimulate abnormal eyelash growth (darkening, thickening, lengthening)
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If you develop rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath after taking the medication, you could be allergic to the medication. Please seek medical attention immediately.

Are there any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- DO NOT wear contact lenses during your medication treatment.
- All eye medications are to be discarded 30 days after opening or as directed by doctor or pharmacist.

How do I Store These Medications?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.
- For eye drop(s) that needs to be stored in the refrigerator: Store your medication in a refrigerator between 2 – 8°C. Do not freeze.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

