Use of Eye Drops

Use eye drops as directed. It may be easier to have someone help you put the drops in your eye. If you are alone, use the following instructions to help you.

- Wash your hands before putting drops in your eyes.
- Read the label and look at your medication. Check for any expiration date that may appear on the bottle or tube. Changes of color may be a warning that the medication is old or ineffective. This is especially true if the medication has become brown in color. If you have questions or concerns, call your caregiver.

DROPS:

- Tilt your head back with the affected eye uppermost. Gently pull down on your lower lid. **Do not** pull up on the upper lid.
- Look up. Place the dropper or bottle just over the edge of the lower lid near the white portion at the bottom of the eye. The goal is to have the drop go into the little sac formed by the lower lid and the bottom of the eye itself. **Do not** release the drop from a height of several inches over the eye. That will only serve to startle the person receiving the medicine when it lands and forces a blink.
- Steady your hand in a comfortable manner. An example would be to hold the dropper or bottle between your thumb and index (pointing) finger. Lean your index finger against the brow.
- Then, slowly and gently squeeze one drop of medication into your eye.
- Once the medication has been applied, place your finger between the lower eyelid and the nose, pressing firmly against the nose for 5-10 seconds. This will slow the process of the eye drop entering the small canal that normally drains tears into the nose, and therefore increases the exposure of the medicine to the eye for a few extra seconds

OINTMENTS:

- Look up. Place the tip of the tube just over the edge of the lower lid near the white portion at the bottom of the eye. The goal is to create a line of ointment along the inner surface of the eyelid in the little sac formed by the lower lid and the bottom of the eye itself.
- Avoid touching the tube tip to your eyeball or eyelid. This avoids contamination of tube or the medicine in the tube.
- Once a line of medicine has been created, hold the upper lid up and look down before releasing the upper lid. This will force the ointment to spread over the surface of the eye.
- Your vision will be very blurry for a few minutes after applying an ointment properly. **This is normal** and will clear as you continue to blink. For this reason, it is best to apply ointments just before going to sleep, or at a time when you can rest your eyes for 5-10 minutes after applying the medication.

GENERAL:

- Store your medicine in a cool, dry place after each use.
- If you need a second medication, wait at least two minutes. This helps the first medication to be taken up (*absorbed*) by the eye.
- If you have been instructed to use both an eye drop and an eye ointment, always apply the drop first – and then the ointment 3-4 minutes afterward.

Never put medications into the eye unless the label reads, “For Opthalmic Use,” “For Use In Eyes” or “Eye Drops.” If you have questions, call your caregiver.

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