



Medicines-Taking Information

Leaflet - Eyes and Ears



Many patients have difficulty administering products to treat conditions of the eye and ear. Drugs to treat conditions for these body parts are formulated into either drops or ointment for the eye and drops for the ear.

This leaflet will hopefully help you if you have purchased over the counter or been prescribed an eye or ear preparation.



Eye Drops

These products are often 5, 10 or 15ml bottles with a dropper pre-attached and a screw-on cap. Some eye products e.g. chloramphenicol, Xalatan and Xalacom eye drops need to be kept in the fridge. Others just need to be stored in a cool, dry place away from children. **TIP: most eye products should be discarded 4 weeks after opening.**

-Step 1. Ensure you have thoroughly washed your hands before touching the bottle or your eye.

-Step 2. Un-screw the cap but try and avoid touching the dropper tip with your finger or touching it on your eyeball.



-Step 3. Whilst tilting your head back to a comfortable position, pull down your lower eye lid with your index finger to form a pocket.

-Step 4. Hold the dropper with the tip towards your eye as close to the eye as possible without touching the dropper end with your eyeball.

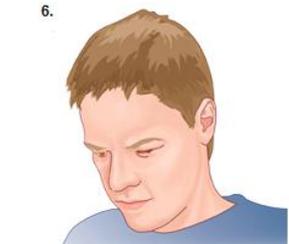
-Step 5. While looking up, gently squeeze the bottle so that a single drop falls into the pocket created by your index finger and lower lid.

-Step 6. Close your eye for 2 to 3 minutes and tilt your head down as if looking at the floor. Try not to blink or squeeze your eyelids.

-Step 7. Wipe away any excess liquid from your face with a clean tissue. If you are to use more than one drop to the same eye, wait at least 5 minutes before instilling the next drop.

-Step 8. When you have finished, replace the cap on the dropper bottle, don't wipe or rinse the tip or bottle, this will drag water into the product.

-Step 9. Wash your hands to remove any medication that may have got onto them during the process.



Eye Ointment

These products are often 5 or 10g tubes with a nozzle for ease of administration pre-attached and a screw-on cap. Eye ointments should be stored in a cool dry place away from children.

-Step 1. Ensure you have thoroughly washed your hands before touching the tube or your eye.

-Step 2. Un-screw the cap and holding the tube between your thumb and forefinger place the tip close to your eyelid but try and avoid touching the nozzle tip with your finger or touching it on your eyeball.



-Step 3. Tilt your head backwards into a comfortable position and pull down your lower eye lid with your index finger to form a pocket.

-Step 4. Squeeze a ribbon of ointment into the pocket created by your index finger and lower lid without touching the tip of the nozzle onto any part of your eye. Remove your index finger to close the pocket.

-Step 5. Blink your eye gently then close your eye for 1 to 2 minutes.

-Step 6. With a clean tissue wipe away any excess ointment from your eyelids and lashes and with another clean tissue wipe the tip of the tube clean.



-Step 7. Replace and tighten the cap

-Step 8. Wash your hands to remove any medication that may have got onto them during the process.



Ear Drops

These preparations are usually 5, 10 or 15ml bottles but can be either a bottle plus a dropper or a bottle with a dropper pre-attached (as with eye drops). They need to be stored in a cool dry place away from children.

-Step 1. Ensure you have thoroughly washed your hands before touching the bottle or your ear.

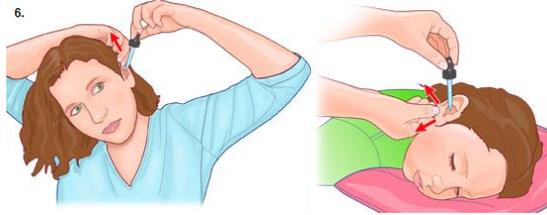
-Step 2. Gently clean your ear with a damp face cloth and then towel dry it.

-Step 3. Warm the drops to near body temperature by holding the container in the palm of your hand for a few minutes.



-Step 4. If the drops appear cloudy, shake the bottle gently for 10 seconds.

-Step 5. If the container is a bottle plus dropper, draw the medication into the dropper by squeezing the pipette. If it is a container with a pre-attached dropper hold the dropper bottle with the tip down.



-Step 6. Tilt the affected ear upwards or lie on your side. Pull the ear backwards and upwards, if administering to a child (under 3 years of age) pull the ear backwards and down, to open the ear canal.

-Step 7. Place the correct number of drops in your ear. Gently press the small skin flap at the ear opening (the tragus) over the ear to help the drops run down into the ear canal.



-Step 8. Keep your affected ear tilted upwards for a few moments then wipe away an excess medication from your cheek with a clean tissue.



-Step 9. Replace the dropper into the bottle or the cap onto the bottle.

-Step 10. Wash your hands to remove any medication that may have got onto them during the process.

Important Points for Eye/Ear Preparations

- ❖ Ensure hands are washed before using the product
- ❖ Instil the correct number of drops
- ❖ Don't touch the eye/ear with the dropper/nozzle
- ❖ Discard 4 weeks after opening
- ❖ You may experience a taste of drops in your mouth, this is normal, a flavoured drink should remove the taste
- ❖ Some eye drops/ointments irritate for a while, do not wear contacts or drive while using eye preparations especially if your vision is affected

Further Information

If you feel you would like to read up on specific information about eye/ear preparations these websites may be beneficial to you:-

❖ **Patient.co.uk.**

-This website aims to give patients a bit more insight into conditions/medication in a language they can understand. It is available at: [http://www.patient.co.uk/health/Eye-Drops-\(How-to-Use\).htm](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/Eye-Drops-(How-to-Use).htm)

❖ **NHS Choices.**

-Another website that aims to provide patients with relevant understandable information. Available at: <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>



Medicines-Taking Information

Leaflet - Antibiotics



There are many different types of antibiotics. Which one your doctor prescribes depends on what kind of bacteria are causing your symptoms.

It is important to note that many of us carry bacteria on our skin every day, but it is only when our immune system becomes weakened due to stress or other illnesses that the bacteria are allowed to take hold and we develop symptoms.

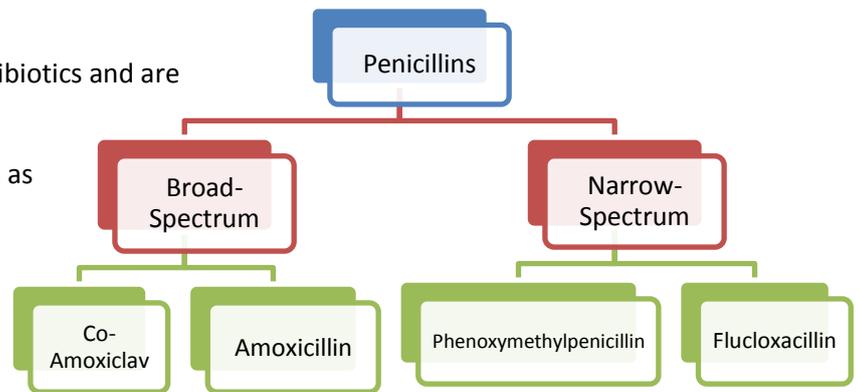
This leaflet will hopefully help you if you have been prescribed a course of antibiotics and require some further information.

Penicillins

This is the most commonly prescribed class of antibiotics and are effective at killing most bacteria.

Penicillins are used to treat simple infections such as throat infections, chest infections, ear infections and urinary-tract infections. Newer drugs in this class can also be used for infections such as pneumonia, meningitis and gonorrhoea.

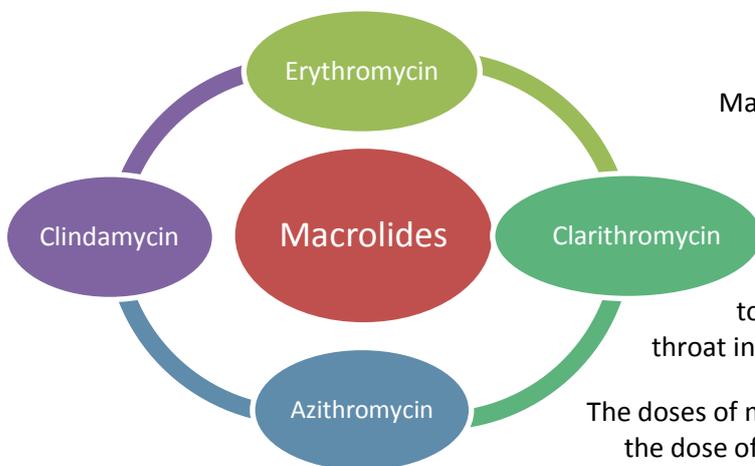
Some are what is known as broad-spectrum antibiotics, these are effective at killing a wider range of bacteria than those that are narrow-spectrum.



The dose of most penicillins is: **ONE to be taken THREE times DAILY** this means you should spread the three doses out over the day, ideally with four hours between each.

Flucloxacillin is an exception to the rule, the dose is: **ONE to be taken FOUR times DAILY**, again doses should be spread as equally as possible between breakfast and bedtime leaving approximately three hours between each tablet and they should be taken on an empty stomach.

As with all medicines alcohol should be kept to moderation. This doesn't mean you cannot have a drink but in case the medicine causes you to feel drowsy alcohol should be kept to a minimum.



Macrolides

Macrolides are the second most common group of antibiotics. They are prescribed to people who are allergic to penicillin and also to kill other bacteria that penicillin are not effective against.

Because they have a similar activity, macrolides are used to treat similar infections as penicillins e.g. chest infections, throat infections and urinary tract infections.

The doses of macrolides differ depending on which one you are taking, the dose of erythromycin is **ONE to be taken FOUR times DAILY**, so you should leave around three hours in-between each tablet. If you are taking clarithromycin, the dose is **ONE to be taken TWICE DAILY**, and for clindamycin the dose is **ONE to be taken DAILY**.

Other Antibiotics

❖ **Tetracyclines.** This group of antibiotics includes tetracycline, oxytetracycline, minocycline and doxycycline. These are broad-spectrum antibiotics that are used to treat chest infections and also for acne. The dose of tetracycline and oxytetracycline is **ONE to be taken FOUR times DAILY**. For doxycycline, it is common to take **TWO tablets for the first dose** then **ONE tablet DAILY**.

- ❖ **Quinolones.** This group of antibiotics includes ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin and moxifloxacin. They are broad-spectrum antibiotics most commonly used to treat chest infections, urinary tract infections and sinusitis. The dose of ciprofloxacin is **ONE to be taken TWICE DAILY** and for levofloxacin and moxifloxacin it is **ONE to be taken DAILY**.
- ❖ **Metronidazole.** This antibiotic is used for throat infections if the patient is allergic to penicillin, bacterial vaginosis and for difficult-to-treat bacteria such as *Clostridium difficile*. Because this drug can be used to treat many different infections the dose differs depending on what infection you have. It is very important that you **do not consume alcohol** whilst taking this medication and for 48 hours after the course has finished, it will make you very ill.
- ❖ **Trimethoprim/Nitrofurantoin.** These drugs are mainly used to treat urinary tract infections although trimethoprim can also be prescribed for bronchitis. The dose is **ONE to be taken FOUR times DAILY** for nitrofurantoin and **ONE to be taken TWICE DAILY** for trimethoprim. These two antibiotics can also be used to *prevent* urinary tract infections by taking **ONE at NIGHT**.

Side Effects of Antibiotics

Penicillins	Macrolides	Tetracyclines	Quinolones	Metronidazole	Trimethoprim/ Nitrofurantoin
Diarrhoea	Nausea/vomiting	Nausea/vomiting	Nausea/vomiting	Nausea/vomiting	Nausea/vomiting
Rash*	Diarrhoea^	Diarrhoea	Indigestion	Anorexia	Itchiness/rash
Nausea/vomiting	Abdominal discomfort	Headache	Abdominal pain/diarrhoea	Taste disturbances	Swelling of tongue and face
Dizziness	Pancreatitis	Rash*	Headache	Jaundice	Blood disorders~
Headache	Tinnitus	Visual disturbances	Dizziness	Darkening of urine	Nerve pain
			Rash*	Drowsiness	Rash
			Sleep Disturbances	Rash	Alopecia

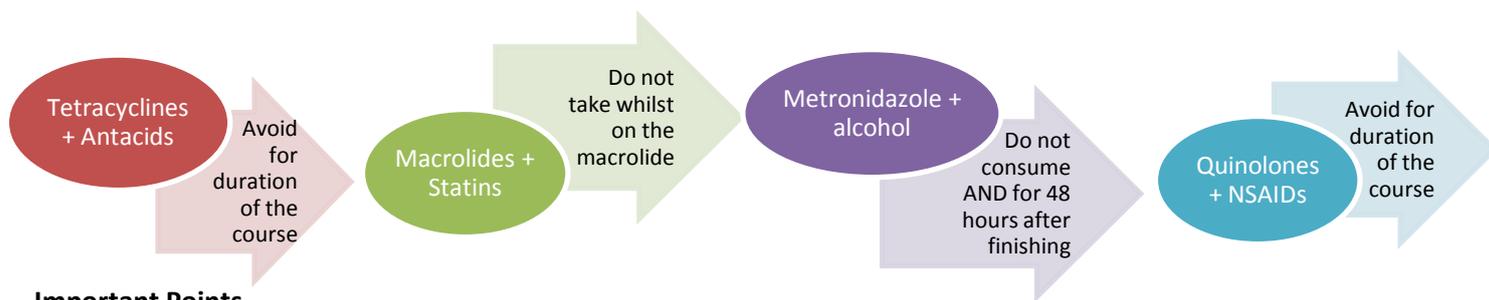
* If your rash started on commencement of treatment seek immediate medical advice, you may be allergic to the drug

^ If you are taking clindamycin and experience heavy diarrhoea seek medical advice

~ You should be notified to look out for signs of blood disorders e.g. fever, sore throat, rash, mouth ulcers, bruising or bleeding and seek immediate medical attention if these develop.

This list is not exhaustive but contains the key side effects that have occurred in more than 1 in 10 people.

Interactions between Antibiotics and other Medicines



Important Points

It is very important when you start a course of antibiotics that you take them regularly throughout the daytime and complete the course. If you don't complete the course the risk of the infection returning is much higher.

Further Information

If you feel you would like to read up on specific information about medicines used to treat infection or about infection itself these websites may be beneficial to you:-

❖ **Patient.co.uk.**

-This website aims to give patients a bit more insight into their conditions/medication in a language they can understand. It is available at: <http://www.patient.co.uk/>

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