



NORTHERN IRELAND FORMULARY – EYE CARE

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The Northern Ireland Formulary advises on treatment choice for certain conditions, based on evidence, safety and cost. The eye chapter covers two therapeutic areas only: **glaucoma** and **dry eye**.

CHRONIC OPEN ANGLE GLAUCOMA

- Treatment may take the form of eye drops, laser or surgical procedures.
- Prostaglandin analogues are recommended as first line pharmacological therapy.
- Eye drops for glaucoma should be prescribed generically, including combination products where available.
- Promote the correct use of eye drops and adherence to treatment to optimise response.
- If a first-line treatment is not tolerated or unsuccessful, try an alternative generic prostaglandin analogue or beta blocker.
- If intraocular pressure is not sufficiently reduced, consider switching to, or adding in, a medicine from another therapeutic class.

First line

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Prostaglandin analogue | • Latanoprost 50microgram/ml x 2.5ml | Apply once daily, preferably in the evening |
| Beta-blocker | • Timolol 0.25% or 0.5% x 5ml | Apply twice daily |
| Combination | • Latanoprost 50microgram/ml & Timolol 5mg/ml x 2.5ml | Apply once daily |

Other options

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Carbonic anhydrase inhibitor | • Brinzolamide 10mg/ml x 5ml | Apply twice daily, increased to max. 3 times daily if necessary |
| Sympathomimetic | • Brimonidine tartrate 0.2% x 5ml | Apply twice daily |

DRY EYE

- Advise patients that, for simple dry eye, products may be purchased over the counter in the first instance.
- Patient leaflets are available on the [NI formulary website](#).
- If the choice is made to prescribe, the majority of patients in primary care can be managed with first line agents.
- Products should be tried for 4–6 weeks before assessing benefit.
- All tear supplements should be given in conjunction with advice on modifiable risk factors (e.g. lid hygiene, contact lens wear).
- Consider impact of patient’s medication and exacerbating conditions.
- Consider early referral if patient has an associated autoimmune disease or severe or persistent symptoms.

First line

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Hypromellose 0.3% | Cost-effective <i>preservative-free</i> option: Evolve® Hypromellose 0.3% |
| Carbomer 980 0.2% | |

Second line

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Sodium hyaluronate preservative-free eye drops | Cost effective products include: |
| | • Eyeaze® (0.1%, 0.2% or 0.4%) |
| Carmellose sodium preservative-free eye drops | • Eyeaze® Carmellose 1% |

Some patients may benefit from the use of an eye ointment at night.

Consider referral if no satisfactory improvement from 2nd line choices within 4-6 weeks

Consider **preservative-free** formulations for patients with:

- Preservative allergy or evidence of epithelial toxicity from preservatives
- Contact lens wearers
- Long term treatment > 3/12 or frequency > 4 times daily

Preservative-free formulations may be available as multidose bottles or single unit doses, depending on the product. Use a licensed product and ensure a ‘special’ is not selected.

For more information:

- <https://niformulary.hscni.net/formulary/11-0-eye-glaucoma/>
- <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng81>
- <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/dry-eye-disease/>
- <http://lookafteryoureyes.org>
- <https://www.prescipp.info/>

Eye drop dispensing aids are useful for those patients who struggle to self-administer eye drops. There are currently 5 eye drop dispensers included in [Part III](#) of the NI Drug Tariff and available on prescription.

Dispensing aids make it easier for people to position the bottle over the eye and squeeze to dispense a drop. They can be useful for people who have problems with their sight, mobility or dexterity for example, and can help with adherence to their prescribed eye drops.

The 5 dispensing aids included here are all available on prescription but there are others which may be available from eye clinics or to purchase from some pharmacies or opticians.

When recommending an eye drop dispensing aid, it is important to ensure that the eye drops and dispenser are compatible. With generic preparations, the style of eye drop bottle may vary, depending on the manufacturer.

RESOURCES

These websites have helpful information for checking compatibility and instructions for use.

- <https://opticare.uk/>
- <https://www.moorfields.nhs.uk/knowyourdrops>
- <https://glaucoma.uk/product-category/free-resources/dispensing-aids-free-resources/>
- <https://shop.rnib.org.uk/health-and-mobility/health-and-wellbeing/eye-drop-dispensers>

Opticare®

Suitable for use with most round 2.5–10ml bottles

- Cylindrical, grip-sized dispenser with an eye piece for aiming the drop accurately
- Designed for people whose hands shake or have difficulty squeezing the bottle
- Supplied with an adaptor to fit slim bottles if necessary
- Available in different colours so can be used to distinguish between different drops



Opticare® Arthro 5 or 10

Opticare® Arthro 5 fits most 2.5 ml and 5ml round bottles

Opticare® Arthro 10 fits most 10ml and 15ml bottles

- Especially designed for people with limited hand or shoulder movement
- Adjustable eyepiece for stable positioning of the bottle over the eye
- Long handles make it easier to squeeze the bottle



eyGuide®

Designed for use with EY and PF range by Aspire Pharma

Also compatible with most round, multi-dose, preservative-free bottles of 3, 5, 10ml

- Similar in style to Opticare®
- Designed to assist with positioning over the eye and squeezing of the bottle

ComplEye®

Designed for use with all HYLO® and Hycosan® eye drops

- Designed to help with stable positioning of the bottle and accurate application of drops
- Specifically for HYLO® range, which are larger pump-style bottles, so will not fit other types

If you have any queries or require further information on this poster, please contact one of the Pharmacy Advisers in your local SPPG office.

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