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Olopatadine eye drops for hay fever (Opatanol)

Olopatadine drops relieve eye inflammation associated with hay fever.

Use the drops twice a day.

It is not recommended that you wear soft contact lenses while you are using the drops.

About olopatadine eye drops

Type of medicine	Antihistamine eye drops
Used for	To relieve the eye symptoms of hay fever
Also called	Opatanol®
Available as	Eye drops

Hay fever is caused by an allergy to pollen. The symptoms of hay fever are due to your immune system reacting to pollen. Cells on the lining of your eyes release a chemical called histamine, which causes eye inflammation (conjunctivitis). Hay fever is also called **seasonal allergic conjunctivitis** because the symptoms tend to occur at the same time, or in the same season, each year. Typical symptoms of seasonal allergic conjunctivitis are red, itchy and watery eyes.

Olopatadine eye drops, an **antihistamine**, relieve the eye symptoms of hay fever by blocking the action of histamine.

Before using olopatadine eye drops

To make sure this is the right treatment for you, before you start using olopatadine eye drops it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you wear soft contact lenses.
- If the drops are intended for a child under 3 years of age. Olopatadine eye drops are not recommended for this age group.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to an antihistamine or to any eye drops.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.

How to use olopatadine eye drops

1. Wash your hands well before you use the drops.
2. Open the bottle.
3. Tilt your head back a little and pull the lower lid of your eye downwards to form a pocket.
4. Hold the bottle upside down near to your eye. Try not to touch your eye as you do this.
5. Gently press on the base of the bottle to release one drop into your eye.
6. Close your eye for a minute or two, and press gently on the side of your nose where the corner of your eye meets your nose. This helps to stop the drop from draining away and keeps it in your eye.
7. Repeat the process in your other eye if you have been told to use the drops in both eyes.
8. Put the cap back on the bottle.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from the pack. The manufacturer's leaflet will give you more information about the drops, and a full list of side-effects which you may experience from using them.
- Use olopatadine eye drops twice a day (morning and evening).
- Take care not to touch your eye, fingers, or any other surface with the dropper of the bottle. This could infect the drops left in the bottle.
- When you first put the drops into your eye, it may cause blurred vision. This should quickly clear, but make sure you can see clearly again before you drive or before using machines or tools.
- If you are using any other eye drops, leave at least five minutes between applying each preparation. This is to prevent more liquid going into your eye than it can handle. Otherwise the drops will overflow from your eye and not have the intended effect.
- Do not wear soft contact lenses while you are using olopatadine eye drops unless your doctor has advised you otherwise. This is because there is a preservative in the drops which can affect soft contact lenses.
- If your symptoms do not improve within a few days, or if they become worse, check again with your doctor.
- Your doctor will tell you how long to use the drops for. This will be for no longer than four months.

Can olopatadine eye drops cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with olopatadine eye drops. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with the drops. Speak with your doctor if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Common olopatadine eye drop side-effects – these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people	What can I do if I experience this?
Eye irritation or discomfort (such as dryness, burning or stinging)	This is usually mild and does not last for long
Blurred vision	If this happens, do not drive until you can see clearly again
Headache, feeling tired, dry nose, and an unpleasant taste in your mouth	These effects are usually mild and do not last long

If you experience any other symptoms, which you think may be due to the drops, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store olopatadine eye drops

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- Eye drops only keep for four weeks once the bottle has been opened, so do not use olopatadine drops if the bottle has been open for longer than this. This will help to prevent the risk of eye infections.

Important information about all medicines

If you buy any medicines check with a pharmacist that they are safe to use with your other medicines.

Never use more than the prescribed dose.

If you suspect that someone has swallowed some of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are using.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Opatanol® 1 mg/ml eye drops](#); Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated July 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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