

Minims[®] Pilocarpine

Pilocarpine Nitrate Eye Drops

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Minims Pilocarpine, including how to use the eye drops.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have benefits and risks. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using Minims Pilocarpine against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with the medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Minims Pilocarpine is used for

Minims Pilocarpine is commonly used at the end of an eye examination to return the size of the pupil back to normal.

It is also used to lower raised pressure in the eye and to treat glaucoma. Glaucoma is a condition in which the pressure of fluid in the eye may be high. However, some people with glaucoma may have normal eye pressure.

Glaucoma is usually caused by a build up of the fluid which flows through the eye. This build up occurs because the fluid drains out of your eye more slowly than it is being pumped in. Since new fluid

continues to enter the eye, joining the fluid already there, the pressure continues to rise. This raised pressure may damage the back of the eye resulting in gradual loss of sight. Damage can progress so slowly that the person is not aware of this gradual loss of sight. Sometimes even normal eye pressure is associated with damage to the back of the eye.

There are usually no symptoms of glaucoma. The only way of knowing that you have glaucoma is to have your eye pressure, optic nerve and visual field checked by an eye specialist or optometrist. If glaucoma is not treated it can lead to serious problems, including total blindness. In fact, untreated glaucoma is one of the most common causes of blindness.

Although Minims Pilocarpine helps control your glaucoma it does not cure it.

For more information about glaucoma, contact the Glaucoma Foundation of Australia on 1800 500 880.

Minims Pilocarpine is used, either alone or in combination with other eye drops/medicines, to lower raised pressure within your eye(s).

Minims Pilocarpine lowers the pressure in the eye(s) by allowing more fluid to flow out from within your eye(s).

It belongs to a family of medicines called parasymphomimetics.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed to you.

Your doctor may have prescribed it for another reason.

Before you use Minims Pilocarpine

When you must not use it

Do not use Minims Pilocarpine if you have an allergy to:

- * any medicine containing Pilocarpine
- * any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- * shortness of breath
- * wheezing or difficulty breathing
- * swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body
- * rash, itching or hives on the skin.

Do not use Minims Pilocarpine if you have any of the following medical conditions:

- * a condition known as iritis, an inflammation of the coloured part of the eye
- * a condition known as uveitis, a serious inflammation of the eye
- * if you have a certain type of glaucoma called "pupillary block glaucoma", a condition that prevents normal flow of fluid through the pupil
- * you have or have had a detached retina (back part of the eye).

Do not put the eye drops into your eye(s) while you are wearing soft contact lenses.

You can put your soft contact lenses in your eyes 15 minutes after using Minims Pilocarpine.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

If you are not sure whether you should start using this medicine, talk to your doctor.

Before you start to use it

Tell your doctor if you have had an allergy to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or are breast-feeding.

Your doctor will discuss with you the risks and benefits involved.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- * breathing difficulties or lung problems eg. Asthma.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell him/her before you start using Minims Pilocarpine.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines and Minims Pilocarpine may interfere with each other. These include:

- * atropine and related medicines
- * cyclopentolate
- * Other medicines or eye drops for glaucoma.

These medicines may be affected by Minims Pilocarpine or may affect how well it works. You may need different amounts of your medicines, or you may need to use different medicines.

Your doctor and pharmacist will have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while using this medicine.

How to use Minims Pilocarpine

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

If you do not understand the instructions on the label, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.

How much to use

Use Minims Pilocarpine only when prescribed by your doctor. Your doctor will tell you how often to use the eye drops and how many drops to use each time.

The usual dose of Minims Pilocarpine is one or two drops instilled into the eye(s).

How to use it

In most cases, your doctor will instil the eye drops. However, should you be required to instil the drops, follow the steps below.

You may find it easier to put drops in your eye while you are sitting or lying down.

If you are wearing soft contact lenses, remove them before putting the drops in your eye(s).

Follow these steps to use the eye drops.

1. Wash your hands well with soap and water.
2. Shake the container.
3. Break the seal.
4. Hold the container upside down in one hand between your thumb and forefinger.
5. Using your other hand, gently pull down your lower eyelid to form a pouch/pocket.

6. Tilt your head back and look up.
7. Put the tip of the container close to your lower eyelid. Do not let it touch your eye.
8. Release one or two drops into the pouch/pocket formed between your eye and eyelid by gently squeezing the container.
9. Close your eye. Do not blink or rub your eye.
10. While your eye is closed, place your index finger against the inside corner of your eye and press against your nose for about two minutes. This is very important when administering to children. This will help to stop the medicine from draining through the tear duct to the nose and throat, from where it can be absorbed into other parts of your body.
11. Repeat steps 4-10 for the other eye if needed.
12. Throw away any eye drops left in the container.
13. Wait 15 minutes before inserting your soft contact lenses.

You may feel a slight burning sensation in the eye shortly after using the eye drops. If this persists, or is very uncomfortable, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

How long to use it

Continue using your medicine for as long as your doctor tells you.

If you forget to use it

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and use your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, use it as soon as you remember, and then go back to using your medicine as you would normally.

Do not use a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted side effect.

If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you have trouble using the eye drops, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

If you use too much (overdose)

If you accidentally put more drops in your eyes than advised by your doctor, immediately rinse your eye(s) with warm water.

Accidental swallowing of the solution is unlikely to cause any bad side effects due to the low content of Pilocarpine Nitrate. If you think that an infant or young child may have swallowed any or all of the contents of the container of Minims Pilocarpine, immediately telephone your doctor or Poisons Information Centre (Australia 13 11 26, New Zealand 0800 764 766) for advice.

While you are using Minims Pilocarpine

Things you must do

If you are to have eye surgery tell your doctor you are using Minims Pilocarpine.

Your doctor may advise you to stop your treatment with Minims Pilocarpine.

If you wear contact lenses, remove them before using Minims Pilocarpine.

You can put contact lenses back in your eyes 15 minutes after using the eye drops.

If you become or plan to become pregnant while using this medicine, tell your doctor immediately.

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are using Minims Pilocarpine.

Tell any other doctors, dentists and pharmacists who treat you that you are using this medicine.

Things you must not do

Do not stop using Minims Pilocarpine before first talking to your doctor.

If you stop using your eye drops, your eye pressure may rise again and damage to your eye may occur.

Do not use this medicine to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not give this medicine to anyone else, even if you think they have the same condition as you.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Minims Pilocarpine affects you.

This medicine generally does not cause any problems with your ability to drive a car or operate machinery. However, it may cause transient blurred vision at the time of application and sufficient time should be allowed to regain clear vision before driving or operating hazardous machinery.

Be careful at night and in poor light until you know how Minims Pilocarpine affects you.

This medicine may cause difficulty adapting to the dark. Caution is advised with driving or performing hazardous tasks in poor light.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you do not feel well while you are using Minims Pilocarpine.

This medicine helps most people with high eye pressure and glaucoma, but it may have unwanted effects in a few people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some of the side effects.

Do not be alarmed by the following lists of side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- * blurred vision and/or problems seeing clearly
- * burning, stinging, redness or watering of the eyes
- * local irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
- * poor night vision
- * short sightedness
- * headache or browache.

The above list includes the more common side effects of your medicine.

It is possible that Minims Pilocarpine eye drops may be absorbed into other parts of your body.

Tell your doctor immediately or visit Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:

- * increased sweating
- * muscle tremors
- * nausea and/or vomiting
- * diarrhoea
- * trouble breathing or wheezing
- * watering of the mouth.

The above list includes more serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation. These side effects are rare.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some patients. Tell your doctor if you notice any other effects.

After using Minims Pilocarpine

Storage

Keep the unopened eye drops in a refrigerator (2-8°C) where children cannot reach them. Do not freeze the eye drops or expose them to strong light.

Discard each single dose unit and any remaining solution in it immediately after use. Do not save unused contents.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop using the eye drops or they have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any remaining containers.

Product description

What it looks like

Minims Pilocarpine comes in single dose units containing 0.5mL of a clear, colourless solution.

Each carton contains 20 single dose units.

Ingredients

Minims Pilocarpine contains 2% w/v of Pilocarpine Nitrate as the active ingredient.

It also contains:

* Water - Purified

The eye drops do not contain any preservatives.

Manufacturer/Supplier

In Australia Minims Pilocarpine is supplied by:

iNova Pharmaceuticals (Australia)
Pty Ltd
Level 10, 12 Help Street,
Chatswood, NSW 2067
Phone: (02) 8918 6322

Minims Pilocarpine 2%
AUST R 32280

In New Zealand, Minims Pilocarpine Eye Drops is supplied by:

Bausch & Lomb (NZ) Ltd
c/- Bell Gully
Auckland Vero Centre
48 Shortland Street
Auckland 1140
New Zealand

Toll free number: 0508375394

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