

# ZOVIRAX® (*Zo-vi-rax*)

Ophthalmic (eye) ointment

Aciclovir 3%w/w

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## What is in this leaflet

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This leaflet answers some common questions about ZOVIRAX eye ointment. It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

Please read this leaflet before you start using ZOVIRAX eye ointment. If you are helping someone else use ZOVIRAX eye ointment, please read this leaflet before you use it the first time.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the expected benefits against possible risks of you using ZOVIRAX eye ointment. 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.

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## What ZOVIRAX eye ointment is used for

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ZOVIRAX eye ointment is an antiviral used to treat an eye infection called Herpes simplex keratitis. This is a viral infection in the eye. It is **not** used in other infections in the eye such as conjunctivitis.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

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## Before you use ZOVIRAX eye ointment

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### *Do not use ZOVIRAX eye ointment if:*

- you have an allergy to ZOVIRAX eye ointment, acyclovir, valaciclovir or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.
- the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering, or the ointment has changed colour.
- the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack has passed.  
If you use this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work.
- it is more than a month after you first opened the tube of ointment.

If you are not sure whether you should start using ZOVIRAX eye ointment, contact your doctor.

Do not give this medicine to anyone else. Your doctor has prescribed it specifically for you and your condition.

### *Before you start to use ZOVIRAX eye ointment*

#### **Tell your doctor if:**

- you have any allergies to any other medicines or any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.
- you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant.
- you are breastfeeding or planning to breastfeed.

There is no information on whether ZOVIRAX eye ointment affects the ability to drive or operate machinery. If you have blurred vision after applying the ointment, do not drive or operate machinery.

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## How to use ZOVIRAX eye ointment

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Follow your doctor's instructions about how and when to use ZOVIRAX eye ointment. ZOVIRAX eye ointment is usually applied five times a day – about every four hours while you are awake. See

below for how to apply.

Do not touch the nozzle of the eye ointment or the eye ointment as it comes out of the tube. Wash your hands well with soap and dry them thoroughly before you apply the eye ointment.

With your finger under the bottom eye lid, pull the skin down gently so that the bottom eye lid comes down creating a little pocket between the eye and the eye lid. Put 10mm (1cm, just under half an inch) of ointment into this pocket. Release the eye lid (stop pulling it) and blink a couple of times to spread the ointment across the eye.

### ***How long to use ZOVIRAX eye ointment***

Keep using for at least three days after the eye infection has gone.

### ***If you forget a dose of ZOVIRAX eye ointment***

If you forget a dose of ZOVIRAX eye ointment use it as soon as you remember, then continue to use approximately every four hours.

It is important not to miss many doses of ZOVIRAX – it needs to be used regularly to work properly.

### ***In case of an overdose***

Overdosing with ZOVIRAX eye ointment when it is applied to the skin is unlikely. However, if you think that someone has accidentally swallowed the ointment, contact your doctor or the National Poisons Information Centre (03-474 7000), or go to your nearest accident and emergency centre. Do this even if there are no signs of poisoning or discomfort.

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## **While you are using ZOVIRAX eye ointment**

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### ***Things you must do***

- If the symptoms of your infection do not improve within a few days, or if they become worse, tell your doctor.
- If you develop itching with swelling of the face, a skin rash or difficulty breathing while you are using ZOVIRAX eye ointment do not use any more and contact your doctor immediately.
- If you become pregnant while you are using ZOVIRAX eye ointment tell your doctor or pharmacist.

### ***Things to be careful of***

- Do not give ZOVIRAX eye ointment to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.
- Do not use ZOVIRAX eye ointment to treat any other complaints including any other eye infections.
- Throw ZOVIRAX eye ointment away 30 days after opening.

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## **Side effects**

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**Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking ZOVIRAX eye ointment.**

Like other medicines, ZOVIRAX eye ointment can cause some side effects. If they occur, they are most likely to be minor and temporary. However, rarely some may be serious and need medical attention.

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.**

### ***Mild Effects***

**Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following that are troublesome or ongoing:**

- Mild stinging of the eye straight after applying the ointment. This usually only lasts a short time.
- Itchy, watery eyes, (conjunctivitis)

### ***More Serious Effects***

**Tell your doctor immediately if you notice any of the following:**

If you think that ZOVIRAX eye ointment is causing you to have an allergic (hypersensitivity) reaction, TELL YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY. Symptoms include:

- Severe skin rash, itching or hives
- Swelling of the face, lips, mouth or throat
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing
- Low blood pressure (feeling faint or dizzy).

You may need urgent medical attention. Serious side effects are very rare.

**Other side effects reported with ZOVIRAX eye ointment include:**

- Marks on the surface of the eye that look like points or dots. You don't need to stop using ZOVIRAX and the marks will disappear again.

Some people may get other side effects while using ZOVIRAX eye ointment.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand anything in this list.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

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## **After using ZOVIRAX eye ointment**

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### ***Storage***

Store in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C. Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines. Do not keep medicines in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills. Throw the tube of ointment away one month after opening it.

Store all medicines out of the reach of children such as in a locked cupboard.

### ***Disposal***

If your doctor advises you to stop using ZOVIRAX eye ointment, the medicine has passed its expiry date, or it is more than one month after opening, ask your pharmacist what to do with any ointment that is left over.

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## **Product Description**

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### ***What It Looks Like***

ZOVIRAX eye ointment is a near-white, translucent (allows light through) eye ointment.

### ***Ingredients***

Aciclovir, white soft paraffin.

**ZOVIRAX eye ointment does not contain sucrose, lactose, gluten or tartrazine.**

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## **Further Information**

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ZOVIRAX eye ointment is only available if prescribed by a doctor.

ZOVIRAX eye ointment is available a 4.5g tube.

### ***Distributor***

Distributed in New Zealand by:  
GlaxoSmithKline NZ Limited  
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