

Insulin eye drops

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

Eye Clinic York Hospital

Phone: 01904 726272

Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Why have I been prescribed insulin eye drops?

Insulin eye drops are used to treat people with:

- Slow-healing epithelial defects – a scratch or wound on an eye's surface that is taking longer to heal than normal.
- Chronic neurotrophic corneas - long-term nerve damage to a cornea resulting in poor feeling and inability to heal normally.

Insulin 1 unit/mL eye drops are made up of 1 unit of short-acting insulin (Humulin S) in 1 mL lubricant (Sodium Chloride 0.9%).

How do I use my eye drops?

1. Always follow the instructions on the bottle label.
2. Wash your hands before opening the bottle.
3. Sit down and tilt your head back.
4. Pull lower eyelid down and look up.
5. Use other hand to squeeze one drop into lower eyelid. Make sure the nozzle does not touch your eye, eyelashes or eyelid.
6. Close your eye and press gently on the inner corner of the eye for 30-60 seconds to make sure the drop is fully absorbed.
7. Please leave at least 5 minutes before using any other eye drops.

How should I store my eye drops?

Insulin eye drops should be stored in the fridge.

If your eye drops are left out of the fridge, please return them to the fridge and contact York hospital pharmacy before using them. York hospital pharmacy can advise you if a new supply is needed.

How long will my eye drops last?

Insulin eye drops expire 60 days after they are made.

The expiry date will be written on the eye drop bottle label. This date is valid if the bottle is unopened. Do not use eye drops after the expiry date unless instructed otherwise.

Once a bottle of insulin eye drops is opened, it can be used for 7 days. This means that you will need a new bottle of insulin eye drops every 7 days. Any used bottles should be thrown away after 7 days of them being open. Any remaining bottles should be given to any community pharmacy to dispose of correctly.

Where can I get a supply of my eye drops?

Insulin eye drops are only supplied by the hospital. This is because insulin eye drops are an unlicensed medicine (see below) made by another hospital and delivered to York hospital.

If you will be unable to collect your eye drops from the York hospital pharmacy, please discuss with your consultant.

Who do I speak to if I have a problem with my medication or need more?

Contact York Hospital Pharmacy if you run out of eye drops or if you have problems with the medication.

Opening hours:

Monday-Friday 8:45am-5:15pm

Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays: 10:00am-1:45pm

Telephone: 01904 725736

Email: yhs-tr.pharmacydispensaryork@nhs.net

What does it mean if a medicine is unlicensed?

In the UK, medicines are checked to make sure they work and are safe. These checks are normally part of a clinical trial.

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) give a product licence to medicines which have passed these checks.

The product licence, also called a market authorisation, will say which condition or conditions that medicine can be used to treat.

An unlicensed medicine is a medicine which does not have a product licence. A medicine might be unlicensed for various reasons including:

- Manufacturers may decide not to try to get new uses for a medicine added to the product license because it is very expensive to complete the necessary clinical trials.
- The number of people with a particular condition is too small to allow clinical trials to be completed.
- The medicine is still going through the licensing process, which can take some time.

How do I know these medicines are safe and will work?

This medicine has been shown to work for a group of patients that your prescriber has experience with treating. Your prescribers will have considered all the options for treating your condition before deciding to give you an unlicensed medicine. The prescriber will have thought carefully about the best medicine for you and your condition. Prescribers have a lot of experience with medicines. They will have read specialist information about the unlicensed medicine and may have talked to other experts.

What if I do not want to use an unlicensed medicine?

This is your choice. Talk it over with your prescriber. Tell them what you are worried about. They will be able to give you more information and advice about the medicine. Your prescriber will also be able to discuss alternative treatments with you and explain why they think this option is the best for you.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact: Peter Baker, Pharmacist, York Hospital Pharmacy Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE or telephone 01904 725736.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website: www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

Owner	Peter Baker, Ophthalmology Pharmacist
Date first issued	May 2026
Review Date	May 2027
Version	1 (issued May 2026)
Approved by	Medicines Policy Group
Document Reference	PIL1807 v1

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