

Using Preservative-free Artificial Tears

Preservatives are in all artificial tears that are in screw-top bottles, with ONLY ONE exception. So, if regular bottled artificial tears are used more than 4-5 times per day, they may be irritating to the eye, rather than soothing. Because of this, preservative-free artificial tears are better, particularly if drops are needed more than 4 times a day, or if eyes are more sensitive. Preservative-free drops can be used very frequently, as often as every hour, if needed.

However, because they are preservative-free, there is the potential for contamination and infection from preservative-free drops. This is prevented by dispensing these drops in small sealed vials and restricting use of the vial to a maximum of one day. To use the vial, break off the top by twisting it. It is very important to keep the opening sterile where the drop comes out. To do this, don't allow the opening to touch ANYTHING: It must not touch: your eye, your eyelid, your finger, any surface, tissue, a bottle, a glass, etc. In other words, it should only touch AIR! If you follow these instructions, you may use one vial for as long as a day, but NOT LONGER. If it touches ANYTHING, you must discard it. If any liquid is still present in the vial after a day, you must NOT use it, but should discard it. Not following these instructions risks an eye infection.

EXCEPTION: Clear eyes Pure Relief is the only preservative-free drop in a bottle. It comes in a special bottle that has a patented built-in filter that keeps germs out. So, it can be used just as frequently as other the other preservative-free tears that are in vials.

- () **Refresh Plus** - excellent, helps clear vision
- () **Tears Naturale Free** - good
- () **Bion Tears** - very good
- () **Celluvisc** - good for severe dry eyes; thicker; may temporarily blur vision
- () **TheraTears** - excellent, comfortable; may actually improve the eye's natural lubrication after several months of use; use **1 drop every minute for 5 minutes** then throw out dropperette (exception to rule for preservative-free tears) → may repeat as often as desired (at least 4 times per day) with new dropperette
- () **Systane** - (preservative-free form) excellent; unique action: forms a gel-like coating that lasts longer in the eye
- () **Soothe** (Lubricant Eye Drops) - helps entire tear film
- () **HypoTears PF** - excellent, very comfortable, helps clear vision; may use with contact lenses
- () **Refresh Optive Sensitive** (Preservative-Free) - dual action formula that lubricates and hydrates
- () **Clear eyes Pure Relief** – only preservative-free drop in a bottle