

Eye Preparation Expiries for both Inpatients and Outpatients

Outpatients.

- Eye Drops/ Eye Ointments containing a preservative
 - To be discarded 28 days after opening as per standard practice.
- Eye Drops without a preservative (e.g. “Minims” etc)
 - To be used for 24 hours once opened if stored in a fridge and have a replaceable cap, unless the manufacturer has a license for them to have a longer expiry once opened e.g. Gentamicin 1.5%. (Some preservative-free eye drops with specialised design of the eye-dropper bottle – ie Hycosan and HyloTears - have expiry dates over 3 months following opening – check the information on the bottle).

Inpatients.

- Individual containers are provided for each patient.
- Preserved drops should be discarded 2 weeks after opening / use.
 - One bottle should be used for both eyes unless there are concerns about contamination / infection and then one bottle for each eye
 - New containers / drops should be used / dispensed post operatively and the pre-operative drops discarded.
 - A fresh supply of eye drops / eye ointments should be used on discharge unless discharged less than 36 hours post-op and a fresh supply has only just been started.
 - Some preservative-free eye drops with specialised design of the eye-dropper bottle – ie Hycosan and HyloTears – should also be discarded 2 weeks after opening if used by inpatients
- Unpreserved drops, typically the “Minims” variety are for single use only. Other drops that are manufactured as “Specials” and have a licensed longer expiry e.g. gentamicin 1.5%, may be used as per the license.

Outpatient clinics

- Unpreserved unit dose drops (eg Minims etc) should be used for one patient only.
- If multidose containers are used they should be used for one patient only and then discarded.