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Ciprofloxacin eye preparations (Ciloxan)

Ciprofloxacin drops and ointment are used to treat bacterial eye infections.

If your vision becomes blurred after using ciprofloxacin, do not drive until you can see clearly again.

Continue to use this preparation for a further 48 hours once your symptoms have gone.

Do not wear contact lenses while you are using ciprofloxacin.

About ciprofloxacin eye preparations

Type of medicine	Antibacterial eye preparation
Used for	Eye infections in adults and children
Also called	Ciloxan®
Available as	Eye drops and eye ointment

Ciprofloxacin eye drops and ointment are used to treat bacterial eye infections. They work by helping to kill the germs (bacteria) which are causing the infection. Eye infections are a common cause of conjunctivitis. In conjunctivitis, your eye becomes inflamed, feels gritty, and may water more than usual. The white of your eye may look red, and your eyelids may become swollen and stuck together with a discharge when you wake up in the morning. Only one eye may be infected to begin with, but it often spreads to both eyes. Most cases of [infective conjunctivitis](#) clear within a week or so without treatment. For more severe infections, or for infections which do not clear on their own, an antibiotic eye drop such as ciprofloxacin is used.

Ciprofloxacin is also prescribed to treat corneal ulcers. A corneal ulcer is one which forms on the delicate layer covering the surface of your eye.

Before using ciprofloxacin eye preparations

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start using ciprofloxacin it is important that your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to ciprofloxacin or any other antibiotic, or to any other eye drops.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.

How to use ciprofloxacin eye preparations

Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from the pack. The leaflet will give you more information about the drops or ointment, and a full list of possible side-effects. If your eyes have an obvious discharge or 'crust', it can help if you bathe them with cool clean water before using ciprofloxacin.

How to use eye drops

- Wash your hands well before you use the drops.

- Remove the cap.
- Tilt your head back a little and pull the lower lid of your eye downwards to form a pocket.
- Hold the bottle upside down near to your eye. Try not to touch your eye as you do this.
- Gently press on the base of the bottle to release one drop into your eye.
- Close your eye for a minute or two, and press gently on the side of your nose where the corner of your eye meets your nose. This helps to stop the drop from draining away and keeps it in your eye.
- Repeat the process in your other eye if you have been told to use the drops in both eyes.
- Replace the cap.

How to use eye ointment

- First wash your hands.
- Remove the cap from the tube.
- Pull the lower lid of your eye downwards to form a pocket.
- Hold the tube upside down near to your eye.
- Squeeze the tube to release a thin line of ointment along the inside of your lower eyelid. Try not to touch your eye with the end of the tube as you do this.
- Blink a few times to spread the ointment around the inside of your eye.
- Repeat the process in your other eye if you have been told to use it in both eyes.
- Replace the cap on the tube.

Getting the most from your treatment

- If you have a **corneal ulcer**, you will need to use ciprofloxacin eye drops regularly, day and night, for the first two days. Your doctor will tell you how often to use them - this is often every 15 minutes to begin with, then every 30 minutes, then every hour. On day three, it is likely that you will be able to reduce the frequency to every four hours. Try not to miss putting the drops in but, if you do forget, put them in as soon as you remember.
- For **other infections**, use the drops regularly exactly as your doctor tells you to. If the infection is severe, this is likely to be every two hours for the first two days. (Just use the drops while you are awake - you do not need to wake yourself up during the night to put them in.) On day three, reduce the frequency down to four times a day.
- Ciprofloxacin eye ointment is frequently prescribed to use at night. If you are using eye drops during the day, you are unlikely to need to use the ointment during the day as well. Sometimes only the eye ointment is prescribed, in which case you may be asked to use it 3-4 times during the day, as well as at bedtime.
- If your symptoms do not improve within a few days, or if they become worse, speak again with your doctor.
- When you first put the drops or ointment into your eye, it may cause blurred vision. This should quickly clear, but make sure you can see clearly again before you drive and before using machines or tools.
- Take care to avoid spreading the infection from one eye to the other, and to other members of your family. Washing your hands regularly (particularly after touching your eyes) and not sharing towels or pillows will help to prevent the infection from spreading.
- If the tip of the tube/bottle touches your eye(s) when putting the drops in, it is a good idea to squeeze out two or three drops straightaway on to some tissue and rinse the tip with salt water.
- Eye infections can cause your eyes to become more sensitive to sunlight than usual. Wearing sunglasses may help to prevent this.
- If you are using any other eye drops or eye ointments, leave 5-10 minutes between applying each preparation.

- Even when your eye appears normal again, there may still be some germs (bacteria) present. It is important to continue to use ciprofloxacin for a further 48 hours once your eye appears normal. This will help to make sure that all the bacteria have been killed. It is likely that you may need to use ciprofloxacin for about a week. You should not use it for longer than three weeks.
- Do not wear contact lenses until your symptoms have completely gone. Wait for 24 hours after the last dose of eye drops before using your lenses again.

Can ciprofloxacin eye preparations cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. These usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Common ciprofloxacin eye drop/ointment side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Blurred vision	If this happens, do not drive until you can see clearly again
Feeling sick (nausea)	This is usually mild and does not last for long
Burning and itching, crusting, eye redness and puffiness, watery eyes, metallic taste	These are usually mild and do not last for long
Occasional allergic skin reactions	Let your doctor know straightaway if you think you have an allergic reaction

Whilst using ciprofloxacin eye drops or ointment, if you feel any pain or swelling of the tendons (tough fibres that attach your muscles to bone - for example, the Achilles heel), stop treatment and let your doctor know straightaway.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to this medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store ciprofloxacin eye preparations

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- Throw away the bottle or tube after you have finished the course of treatment, even if there is some left. Never keep opened eye drops or ointments to use later.

Important information about all medicines

This preparation is for use in your eyes only. If someone swallows some of it, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Ciloxan® 0.3% Eye Drops](#); Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated December 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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