

Consumers Can Help Prevent  
Harmful Medication Incidents

## SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

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### Going for Cataract Surgery? Tips for Managing Your Eye Drops

Cataract surgery is a common procedure to replace the lens in your eye when it has clouded over. **Eye drops** will be prescribed for use before and after the surgery to prevent problems and help with healing. It's important to know what to expect and to follow your eye doctor's directions to keep your eyes healthy.

**Mederror.ca** received a report of an older adult who had cataract surgery. After the surgery, members of the care team gave conflicting advice about how often to use the antibiotic eye drops. The patient and their family did not know which instructions to follow and checked with the eye doctor, who helped them to understand the instructions. The patient and spouse also felt overwhelmed by having to use 3 new types of eye drops. The family made a schedule of when to use each type of eye drop to make it easier to follow the instructions.



#### **Mederror.ca shares these tips for managing your eye drops when you have cataract surgery:**

- Ask your eye doctor for a schedule to help you remember when to use your eye drops, how many drops to use each time, and how long to use them.
  - Some drops may be started before surgery and continue after surgery. Other drops will be used only after surgery.
- When you pick up your eye drops, use the [5 Questions to Ask About Your Medications](https://www.ismp-canada.org/medrec/5questions.htm#l=tab3) to learn how and when to use them. (This resource is available in many languages: <https://www.ismp-canada.org/medrec/5questions.htm#l=tab3>.) If you are having problems managing your eye drops, ask your pharmacist for help.
- Keep the eye drop packaging (label and instructions) because some pharmacies may not add the label directly to the eye drop bottle.
- Learn how to properly give yourself the eye drops. You can also ask your pharmacist (or your caregiver) to teach you how to use them.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and [Patients for Patient Safety Canada](#).

**Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.**

This newsletter shares information about safe medication practices, is noncommercial, and is therefore exempt from Canadian anti-spam legislation.

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