

PLASTIC **EYE** SURGERY ASSOCIATES
CHOOSING THE RIGHT EYE DROPS FOR YOU

Different artificial eye drops and ointments have different ingredients. Do NOT use drops which are designed to “take the red out”.

There are four things you should look for in a lubricating eye drop:

1. The type of **HYDROGEL**. This is the material that allows the drop to stay on the eye for longer and may be the most important factor. The drops below are organized by the type of hydrogel they contain. Some hydrogels are more comfortable for different people. Some people find that mixing drops containing different hydrogels is more effective.
2. The **PERCENTAGE** of hydrogel. The higher the percentage of hydrogel, the longer the drop will last to protect the eye, but the more likely it is to cause some temporary blurring of the vision. Mixing drops of different hydrogel percentages by placing different drops in your eyes is another option, allowing you to create your own hydrogel percentage. The thickest gels/ointments best for night time use include:

Gentel Gel, Refresh Lacri-lube ointment, Refresh PM ointment, Tears Again Night and Day Gel, Tears Naturale PM ointment

3. The **PRESERVATIVE**. Preservative free drops are generally the best tolerated, but they also tend to be the most expensive. If a drop irritates your eye, it is probably the preservative that is the problem, and look for other drops with a different preservative. Common preservatives include Benzalkonium Chloride, Chlorobutanol, Oxyborate compounds, Polyhexamethylene Biguanide, Polyquad, Polyquaternium, Purite, Sodium Chlorite, Sodium Perborate, , Sodium Silver Chloride, and Sorbic Acid.
4. **PROTECTIVE FACTORS**. Different drop manufactures will add special ingredients which they believe confer greater comfort and drop stability. Examples include Hyaluroinc acid in Blink Tears, hyper-osmolar salts in Optive, hypo-osmolar salts in Hypotears or Akwa Tears, and HP-guar in Systane Ultra. The presence of protective factors, however, does **NOT** mean these are necessarily better drops for you.

CARBOXY METHYL CELLULOSE (CMC) – BASED

Optive*, Refresh Liquigel, Refresh Tears, Thera Tears*

GLYCERIN – BASED

Advanced Eye Relief, Computer Eye Drops, Moisture Eyes, Optive, Similasan* Dry Eye, Soothe*, Tears Natural Forte

HYDROXYPROPYL METHYLCELLULOSE (HPMC) - BASED

Bion Tears*, Gentel*, Gentel Mild, Tears Natural II, Tears Natural Free, Tears Natural Forte

OIL – BASED

Refresh Endura, Soothe XP Emollient Eye Drops,

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POLYETHYLENE GLYCOL – BASED

Blink Tears, Systane, Systane Ultra*

POLYVINYL ALCOHOL – BASED

Akwa Tears, Hypotears, Murine Tears, Tears Again

* = drops most frequently mentioned by our patients as being good choices.