



# Department of Nursing POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 239  
VERSION: 1

## **SUBJECT: EYE MEDICATION, INSTILLING**

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### **PURPOSE:**

- To treat eye conditions and infection
- To lubricate the eye or socket
- To anesthetize the eye
- To dilate the pupils
- To stain the cornea to identify abrasions and scars

**POLICY:** After successful completion of the Orientation Medication Module, RNs and LVNs are authorized to administer medications.

### **EQUIPMENT:**

- Prescribed eye medication
- Facial tissues
- Clean gloves
- Sterile gauze pads

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. Verify provider order. Order must clearly indicate which eye, or both, to treat.
2. Confirm patient identity using two identifiers.
3. Validate allergy status.
4. Check expiration date of medication.
5. Perform hand hygiene.
6. Follow the 6 rights of medication administration; the right time, right patient, right medication, right dose, right route, right documentation.
7. Apply clean gloves.
8. Remove any discharge by cleaning around the eye with sterile gauze. Clean from inner canthus to outer, using a fresh pad with each swipe.

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9. Perform hand hygiene and apply clean gloves.
10. Position patient in supine position with head slightly hyper extended, with head turned slightly to the same side as the eye to be treated.
11. With dominant hand, hold eyedropper ½ - ¾ inch above eyeball; rest hand on patient's forehead to stabilize.
12. Use non-dominant hand to expose lower conjunctiva sac by pulling down on cheek.
13. Instruct patient to look up and away. Instill prescribed number of drops into center of conjunctival sac.
14. Wipe away excess medication with tissue, moving from inner to outer canthus. Use a separate tissue for each eye.
15. Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.
16. Documentation on progress notes
  - a. Medication name, strength, number of drops, eye(s) treated
  - b. Date, time and initials of nurse

**NOTE:**

For eye ointment, apply ½ inch strip of ointment along inside edge of the entire lower eyelid from inner to outer canthus. Instruct patient to keep eyes closed for a few seconds.

**REFERENCE:**

Kowalak, J., (Ed.) (2012). Lippincott's nursing procedures (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Approved By: Susan Knapp (CHIEF NURSING OFFICER I)	
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