

Summertime Eye Health Myths



1. **“Can I take my eye drops on holiday with me?”**

Eye drops can be taken on holiday with you, whether you are traveling within the UK or abroad. However, if you are going to a particularly hot environment, it is not recommended to take your eye drops into direct heat with you for extended periods of time. This is because in most cases your eye drops should be kept at room temperature (no higher than 24 degrees Celsius). Always check your patient information leaflet within the medications packaging for specific storage instruction. (Glaucoma UK)

Did you know there are small cooling wallets available for medications such as eye drops and insulin which will keep them cool when out and about for 40+ hours! Not only does this keep your eye drops at a recommended temperature, they will be kept safer from contamination, such as sand, saltwater or chlorine.

Always check your use by and expiry dates before travelling and make sure you have enough eye drops to last you your stay.

2. “Can I travel via aeroplane if I have Ocular Hypertension / Glaucoma?”

You might think that due to an aeroplanes high altitude this may affect the pressure in your eyes, this can be concerning if you have Ocular Hypertension or Glaucoma. The Glaucoma Research Foundation explains that air travel rarely has any effect on Intraocular pressure because the pressure in the cabin is carefully regulated.

What to keep in mind when travelling by aeroplane: To avoid losing or missing doses of your eye medications while travelling, keep them with you in case of flight delays and delayed or lost luggage.

3. “Can I take antihistamines if I have Glaucoma?”

Antihistamines commonly found in prescription or over the counter tablets or liquids are used to relieve allergies including seasonal allergies. The Glaucoma Research Foundation states that side effects relating to your Glaucoma from these medications are uncommon, and the use of antihistamines is usually acceptable for those with Glaucoma.

As well as this, antihistamines are not known to have any adverse reactions with Glaucoma medications, however you should always check with your doctor or pharmacist.

4. “If I go in the swimming pool, will it affect my eye drops?”

There is no reason your eye drops should stop you enjoying the swimming pool this summer. Dr Regiss for the Anne Arundel Eye Centre says it is okay to go swimming! However, just like when using multiple eye medications, you should leave enough time for the eye drops to absorb into the eye (at least 5 minutes) to avoid the risk of the medication being washed out.

You can contact your local sensory team for practical advice, information and support around your sight loss and you may be eligible for a Sensory Impairment Assessment. In York, this is the Yorsensory Team, 01904 202292 or email enquiry@yorsensory.org.uk.