

Zovirax Ophthalmic (eye) Ointment

Acyclovir

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Zovirax ophthalmic ointment. It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with your medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Zovirax ophthalmic ointment is used for

Zovirax ophthalmic ointment is used for the treatment of herpes simplex virus infections of the eye.

Aciclovir (the active ingredient in Zovirax ophthalmic ointment) belongs to a group of medicines called "anti-virals".

Zovirax ophthalmic ointment works by stopping the production of the herpes simplex virus. Zovirax ophthalmic ointment does not get rid of the virus from your body.

Zovirax ophthalmic ointment is only suitable for use in the eye.

Your doctor may have prescribed Zovirax ophthalmic ointment for another purpose. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about why Zovirax ophthalmic ointment has been prescribed for you.

There is no evidence that Zovirax ophthalmic ointment is addictive

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment

When you must not use it

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment if:

- you have or have had an allergy to Zovirax, aciclovir, valaciclovir or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment if the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack has passed.

If you use this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well.

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment 28 days after first opening the tube.

If you are not sure whether you should start using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Before you start to use it

Tell your doctor if:

1. if you have any allergies to any other medicines or any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.

2. if you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment when pregnant.

3. if you are breast-feeding or intend to breast-feed

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment when breast-feeding.

4. If you wear contact lenses.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you use any Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Using other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are using other creams or ointments or taking any other medicine. This includes any that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may affect the way others work. Your doctor or pharmacist will be able to tell you what to do when using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment with other medicines.

How to use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment

How much to use

The usual dose is a 1 cm ribbon of ointment five times a day at approximately 4 hour intervals.

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor and pharmacist carefully.

These directions may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

If you do not understand the instructions on the label, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.

How to use it

It is important to use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment exactly as your doctor told you.

- Wash your hands before and after applying the eye ointment.
- Apply 1cm of the ointment to the inside of the lower eyelid on the affected side.
- If you find this difficult, it may be easier if a mirror is used or for someone else to do this for you.
- Try to avoid letting the tip of the tube touch any part of the eye.
- After application, close your eye for 30 seconds. Repeat the application five times a day at approximately four-hourly intervals, omitting the night time application.
- Your vision may be blurred for a short time (5-10 minutes), and you should wait until you can see clearly again before driving or operating machinery
- It is important to follow the instructions on this leaflet. If, on a few occasions by mistake you apply more than the recommended amount do not worry.

Use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment at the same time every day.

How long to use it

Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you how long to use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Treatment should usually be continued for 14 days or at least 3 days after healing is completed, whichever is shorter.

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment for longer than your doctor tells you.

If you are not sure how long to use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

If you forget to use it

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and use your next dose when you are meant to. Otherwise, use it as soon as you remember, and then go back to using your medicine as you would normally.

Do not use a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

If you have trouble remembering to use your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

If you swallow it

There is not expected to be any untoward effects from swallowing the entire contents of the tube. However if you have any concerns you should still telephone your doctor or Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26), or go to casualty at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have swallowed Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Keep these telephone numbers handy.

While you are using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment

Things you must do

Tell all doctors and pharmacists who are treating you that you are using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

If you feel that your condition is getting worse rather than better, tell your doctor or pharmacist.

Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not used Zovirax ophthalmic ointment exactly as prescribed.

Otherwise, your doctor may think that it was not effective and change your treatment unnecessarily.

If you become pregnant while using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment, tell your doctor.

Things you must not do

Do not give Zovirax ophthalmic ointment to anyone else, even if they have the same symptoms as yours.

Do not use Zovirax ophthalmic ointment to treat other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.

Things to be careful of

Do not use large amounts of Zovirax ophthalmic ointment for a long time.

Avoid wearing contact lenses when using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you do not feel well while you are using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Check with your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you have any problems while using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment, even if you do not think the problems are connected with the medicine or are not listed in this leaflet.

Like other medicines, Zovirax ophthalmic ointment can cause some side effects. If they occur, most are likely to be minor and temporary.

- You may feel a mild stinging immediately after applying the ointment to your eye(s) but this passes quickly.
- Irritation or inflammation of the eye lids (blepharitis) or surface of the eye (eg conjunctivitis)

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

Some may be serious and need medical attention.

If any of the following happen, stop using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment and tell your doctor immediately or go to casualty at your nearest hospital:

A very few people may be allergic/sensitive to Zovirax. There have been rare reports of allergic reactions including swelling, especially of the lips, face and/or eyelids; skin rashes or weals.

Some people may get other side effects while using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you don't understand anything in this list.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.

After using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment

Storage

Keep Zovirax ophthalmic ointment in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Discard 28 days after opening.

Do not store Zovirax ophthalmic ointment or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep Zovirax ophthalmic ointment where young children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop using Zovirax ophthalmic ointment or it has passed its expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any that is left over.

Product description

What Zovirax ophthalmic ointment looks like

Zovirax ophthalmic ointment is a white to pale yellow sterile ointment available in a 4.5 g tube.

Ingredients

Each gram of ointment contains 30mg of aciclovir.

Zovirax ophthalmic ointment also contains the inactive ingredient white soft paraffin.

Zovirax Ophthalmic ointment is supplied in Australia by:

GlaxoSmithKline Australia Pty Ltd
1061 Mountain Highway
BORONIA VIC 3155

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The information provided applies only to:
Zovirax Ophthalmic ointment.

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Your doctor or pharmacist is the best person to give you advice on the treatment of your condition. You may also be able to find general information about your illness and its treatment from other sources, for example from books in public libraries.