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Serum	25%
Balanced saline solution	75%

BACKGROUND

Your serum (fluid component of blood) eye drops have been specially made for you. They have been made either from your blood (autologous) or from a blood donation (allogeneic) collected to the same conditions that apply to all blood donors. Under sterile conditions, the blood donation has been separated into its liquid (serum) and cellular (red and white cells) components. The serum is used in your eye drops and the cells discarded. The liquid serum contains many nutrients and regenerative factors that are used by the cells throughout your body to keep them healthy. This serum has been diluted with sterile saline and bottled to provide you with sterile eye drops.

PRODUCT RISKS AND REACTIONS

Autologous serum eye drops are made from your own blood and no chemicals (like preservatives or antibiotics) are added. Because of this, it is not possible for you to have an allergic response to these drops.

Allogeneic serum eye drops are made from serum which is obtained from a regular, unpaid voluntary donor. Blood is collected with sterile equipment which is used only once. The standards of the New Zealand Blood Service meet or exceed internationally recognised standards for selecting blood donors and for collecting, testing, processing and storing blood products for transfusion. The donation used for production of the eye drops has been tested for major blood borne viruses, Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Despite this there is a very small risk of transmission of infection, currently estimated as being significantly less than 1 in 1 million. No cases of Hepatitis C or HIV have been reported in New Zealand since testing for transmission of these viruses was introduced. Minor virus infections that are common in the community may be passed on occasionally. Since the serum is foreign there is a small risk of an allergic reaction to protein substances in the preparation. Please discuss this potential risk with your ophthalmologist.

CARE AND HANDLING

Warning:

As there are no preservatives used in the manufacturing process, there is nothing to stop bacteria growing in the eye drops. How you handle and care for the drops will determine if they become contaminated (and potentially dangerous). Here are some recommendations for the safe use of your serum eye drops.

- Bacteria do not like the cold, once prepared the eye drops must be stored in the deep freeze compartment of a domestic refrigerator. When frozen the eye drops have a storage life of 6 months from the time of preparation. The expiry date will be indicated on the label after which they must be discarded.
- When required for use thaw one bottle at a time and keep it refrigerated as much as possible. When you travel it is strongly recommended that the eye drop bottle be kept chilled by an icepack in a mini-lunch cooler. All other bottles must be kept frozen in your home freezer.
- Do not use an eye drop bottle for more than one week after it has been thawed. After seven days bottles that have been thawed must be discarded.
- Bacteria normally live on our skin, eyelashes and on the surface of our eyes. Avoiding touching the eyedropper against any part of your eyes/eyelids will minimise the chance of bacterial contamination.
- Use these drops as advised by your ophthalmologist. They cannot be used too often (unlike drops that contain preservatives and other chemicals).
- Take all other regular prescribed medication.
- The drops are for your use alone and must not be shared with another person.

NEED MORE DROPS?

Your doctor will need to request the preparation of serum eye drops. One blood donation typically produces six months’ supply of eye drops. However, because the prescriptions are only valid for three months’ supply, you will need a new prescription to collect your eye drops for the second three months.

If you are due to continue on these drops, you need to contact your Eye Doctor (Ophthalmologist) well before you run out, so that arrangements can be made for you (autologous) or a donor (allogeneic) to have some more blood taken. You need to contact us when you have 3-4 bottles left. Ordinarily, it will take 18 days from the time of collection of your (autologous) or donor (allogeneic) blood before they can be dispensed to you for use.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The healing components in your serum eye drops may have some early soothing effect but their real benefit is often only realised after 1-2 months’ regular use. So please be patient. This delay is due to the fact that very dry eyes have usually been slowly injured over several years. Reversing these longstanding cellular changes cannot happen overnight.

QUESTIONS AND EMERGENCIES

Please contact your Treating Specialist Eye Doctor.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

In the event of an adverse reaction following the use of the eye drops, which might indicate the eye drops have become contaminated or for allogeneic serum eye drops an allergic reaction, please contact your Treating Specialist Eye Doctor.

Also please complete this adverse reaction questionnaire and return it to your Treating Specialist Eye Doctor who will then report the findings to the New Zealand Blood Service.

NOTIFICATION OF AN ADVERSE REACTION

Attach Product label

Patient Name	
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Sex	
Hospital Number	
Eye Drop Batch Number	
Date of adverse event (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Patient’s description of the adverse event	
Treating Doctor’s comment	

Please return the completed form to:

Transfusion Medicine Specialist
 New Zealand Blood Service
 Private Bag 92071
 Victoria Street West
 Auckland 1142 or Fax 09 523 5733