Betnesol® 0.1% w/v Ear, Eye and Nose Drops, solution
(betamethasone sodium phosphate)

Patient Information Leaflet

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start using this medicine
* Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
* If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
* This medicine has been prescribed for you. Do not pass it on to others. It
  may harm them, even if their symptoms are the same as yours.

Your medicine is called Betnesol 0.1% w/v Ear, Eye and Nose Drops,
solution but will be referred to as Betnesol Drops throughout the leaflet.

In this leaflet:
1  What Betnesol Drops are for
2  Before you use Betnesol Drops
3  How to use Betnesol Drops
4  Possible side effects
5  How to store Betnesol Drops
6  Further information

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1  What Betnesol Drops are for

Betnesol Drops belong to a group of medicines called corticosteroids
(‘steroids’ for short).

Betnesol Drops work by reducing inflammation (redness, itching and
soreness). Betnesol Drops are used to treat inflammation of the eye, ear or
nose where there is no infection.

It is important to use this medicine to prevent any damage to the delicate
 tissues of your eyes, ear or nose and to prevent any infection developing.

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2  Before you use Betnesol Drops

Important: Never use this medicine in your eye without first checking
with your doctor. If it is used for the wrong condition, it could lead to
blindness.

Do not use Betnesol Drops if:
* You are allergic to betamethasone
* You are allergic to any of the other ingredients of Betnesol Drops (listed in
  section 6)
* You have not checked your eye condition with your doctor first. If this
  medicine is used in your eye, for the wrong condition, it could lead to
  blindness.
* You have an infection in the eye, or it is producing pus and is sticky
* You have ulcers in your eye (shingles)
* You have glaucoma (increased pressure in the eye)
* You have a perforated ear drum
* You wear soft contact lenses.

If any of the above applies to you talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Check with your doctor before using Betnesol Drops if:
* You have been treated with Betnesol or similar corticosteroid drops
  recently. You should not use corticosteroids for a long time without regular
  medical check-ups from your doctor.
* You have redness in your eyes for which you do not know the cause.
  Steroid treatment must not be given unless the cause of the redness is
  known
* You have an infection of the lining of your nose, which is not being treated
* You have recently had surgery on your nose which has not yet healed
* You have tuberculosis (TB).
* You have thinning of the cornea or sclera (the tissues which cover the
  outer surface of the eye). Using these drops could lead to a hole in the
  eyeball.
* You are giving this medicine to a baby. Using this medicine for a long time
  in babies may cause the adrenal gland to stop working properly.

If any of the above applies to you, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

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3  How to use Betnesol Drops

Important: Your doctor will choose the dose that is right for you. Your
dose will be shown clearly on the label that your pharmacist puts on
your medicine. If it does not, or you are not sure, ask your doctor or
pharmacist.

Things to remember about your dose:
* Always use Betnesol exactly as your doctor has told you
* How often you use the drops will depend on how your body responds to
  the treatment
* Use as few drops as possible for the shortest possible time.

Getting ready to use your medicine
Check that the seal on the bottle is not broken before using Betnesol Drops
for the first time. Wash and dry your hands. Do not breathe on or touch the
dropper nozzle.

Using your medicine
If there is no improvement in your symptoms after 7 days, stop using
the drops and see your doctor again.

Eyes
* The usual dose is 1 or 2 drops put into the eye every one or two hours
* Once the redness, itching and soreness starts to feel better, apply the
drops less often.
  1. Tilt the head back
  2. Gently pull lower eyelid downwards and outwards
  3. Place drops in the gap between the lid and eye (squeeze bottle
     very gently if necessary)
  4. Blink a few times to spread out the drops
  5. Repeat for the other eye if needed.

Medical check-ups
If you are using this medicine for your eyes and you use it for a number of
weeks, your doctor may ask you to have check-ups.

These are to make sure that your medicine is working properly and that the
dose you are taking is right for you. Your doctor will check your eyes for:
* An increase in pressure
* Cataracts
* Infection.

Ears
* The usual dose is 2 or 3 drops put into the ear every two or three hours
* Once the redness, itching and soreness starts to feel better, apply the
drops less often.
  1. Tilt the head to one side
  2. Place drops in the ear canal (squeeze bottle gently if necessary)
  3. Keep head tilted for a minute or two to let the drops soak in
  4. Repeat for the other ear if needed.

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Further information

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Taking other medicines
Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicine, including medicines
obtained without a prescription.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding
If you are pregnant, trying to become pregnant or breast-feeding ask your
doctor or pharmacist for advice before using Betnesol Drops. If you use this
medicine while pregnant, there may be a small risk of cleft palate or retarded
growth in the foetus.

Driving and using machines
Betnesol Drops may cause temporary blurred vision and light headedness. If
this happens to you, do not drive or use machinery until you return to
normal.

Warnings about the ingredients in Betnesol Drops
This medicine contains benzalkonium chloride as a preservative which may
cause skin reactions or eye irritation.

Avoid contact with soft contact lenses. Remove contact lenses prior to
application and wait at least 15 minutes before reinsertion. Benzalkonium
chloride is known to discolour soft contact lenses.

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If any of the above applies to you talk to your doctor or pharmacist.
Possible side effects

Like all medicines Betnesol Drops can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. These may include:

- Ulcers on the surface of the eye (cornea).
- Irritation and dryness in the nose.
- A hole in the eyeball (if you have a disease which cause thinning of the eyeball).
- Nosebleeds.
- Redness of the eye (conjunctivitis).
- Weight loss.
- Drooping of the eyelid.
- Painful itchy skin.
- Enlarged pupils.
- Blurred vision and other alterations to your sight.
- Headache.
- Muscle and joint pain.
- Changes in your senses of smell and taste.

Using too much of this medicine for a long time can prevent your adrenal gland from working properly and producing your body’s own natural steroids (known as adrenal suppression). This means that when you stop using Betnesol Drops, you could experience the following effects:

- Low blood pressure which may make you feel faint.
- A runny nose.
- Painful itchy skin.
- Redness of the eye (conjunctivitis).
- Muscle and joint pain.
- Weight loss.

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard.

By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.