



veonet
Ireland

Specialist Eye Clinics

Corneal Ulcer: Aftercare Instructions

Important:

A corneal ulcer is a serious eye condition involving an open sore on the cornea (the clear front surface of your eye). It requires urgent treatment and careful aftercare to promote healing, prevent complications, and protect your vision. Please follow these instructions closely and attend all follow-up appointments.

What Happened?

Your cornea has developed an ulcer—an open sore caused by infection, injury, or severe dryness autoimmune or inflammatory condition. The cornea is the clear, protective outer layer of your eye, and damage to it can affect your vision if not treated promptly.

Corneal ulcers can be caused by:

- **Bacterial, viral, or fungal infection** (most common)
- **Contact lens wear**, especially if lenses are worn overnight or not cleaned properly
- **Eye injury or trauma**
- **Severe dry eye**
- **Foreign body in the eye**
- **Underlying eye conditions** such as entropion (inward-turning eyelid), blepharitis or exposure keratopathy
- **Underlying autoimmune conditions**
- such as Rheumatoid arthritis

You have been assessed and started on treatment to fight infection, promote healing, and prevent scarring. Now, proper aftercare is essential to protect your vision and ensure full recovery.

What to Expect During Recovery

Common symptoms include:

- Severe eye pain or discomfort
- Redness and inflammation
- Blurred or decreased vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Excessive tearing or watery discharge
- Thick discharge (white, yellow, or green) if infection is present

- A white or grey spot on the cornea (visible ulcer)
- A feeling that something is in your eye
- Swollen eyelids

These symptoms should gradually improve over the coming days. However, healing time varies depending on the size, depth, and cause of the ulcer.

Important: Corneal ulcers are serious and can lead to permanent vision loss if not treated properly. Strict adherence to your treatment plan is essential.

Medications

If you have been prescribed eye drops or ointments to treat your corneal ulcer, **it is crucial that you use them exactly as directed.**

- Antibiotic, antiviral, or antifungal eye drops (depending on the cause)
- Lubricating drops to keep the eye moist
- Cycloplegic drops to reduce pain and prevent complications
- Steroid drops (only if prescribed—never use without your ophthalmologist's approval)

How to Apply Eye Drops/Ointment:

1. **Wash your hands thoroughly** before handling your medication
 2. **Tilt your head back** and look up
 3. **Gently pull down your lower eyelid** to create a small pocket
 4. **Squeeze one drop (or a small ribbon of ointment)** into the pocket—do not let the tip touch your eye
 5. **Close your eye gently** for 1–2 minutes
 6. **Wipe away any excess** with a clean tissue
 7. **Wait at least 5 minutes** between different types of drops if you are using more than one
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Important:

- **Do not miss doses**—corneal ulcers require frequent dosing (sometimes every hour initially)
- Set alarms to remind you when to apply drops, especially during the night if prescribed
- Do not stop using your medications early, even if your eye feels better—complete the full course
- If you run out of medication before your next appointment, contact us immediately
- Store medications as directed (some may need refrigeration)
- **Never use steroid drops unless specifically prescribed**—they can worsen infection

Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- ✓ **Use your prescribed medications exactly as directed**—this is critical for healing
- ✓ **Attend all follow-up appointments**—these are essential to monitor healing and adjust treatment
- ✓ **Wear sunglasses** outdoors to protect your eye from bright light and UV exposure
- ✓ **Keep your eye clean**—gently wipe away any discharge with a clean, damp cloth (boiled and cooled water)
- ✓ **Rest your eyes**—avoid prolonged screen time and reading if it causes discomfort
- ✓ **Sleep with your head elevated** (on extra pillows) to reduce swelling

- ✓ **Wash your hands frequently**, especially before touching your eye or applying drops
 - ✓ **Contact us if your symptoms worsen** (see “When to Seek Urgent Help” below)
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DON'T:

- ✗ **Do not rub or touch your eye**—this can cause further damage and spread infection
 - ✗ **Do not wear contact lenses**—you must stop wearing contact lenses completely until your ophthalmologist says it is safe (this may be several weeks or months)
 - ✗ **Do not wear eye makeup** until your eye has fully healed
 - ✗ **Do not swim or expose your eye to water** (including showers—wear protective eyewear)
 - ✗ **Do not use tap water to rinse your eye**—only use sterile saline or prescribed drops
 - ✗ **Do not drive** if your vision is blurred or you are using medications that affect your sight
 - ✗ **Do not miss doses of your medication**—set alarms if needed
 - ✗ **Do not miss follow-up appointments**—even if your eye feels better
 - ✗ **Do not use old or expired eye drops**
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Contact Lens Wearers: Important Information

If your corneal ulcer was caused by contact lens wear:

- **Stop wearing contact lenses immediately** and do not resume until your ophthalmologist gives you clearance
 - **Discard your current contact lenses, lens case, and solution—**they may be contaminated
 - **Do not wear contact lenses** until the ulcer has completely healed and you have been given the all-clear (this may take several weeks or months)
 - When you do resume wearing lenses, follow strict hygiene practices:
 - Wash your hands before handling lenses
 - Never sleep in contact lenses unless specifically designed for extended wear
 - Replace lenses and cases as recommended
 - Use only sterile contact lens solution—never tap water
 - Remove lenses immediately if you experience any discomfort
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When to Seek Urgent Help

Contact us immediately or go to A&E if you experience:

- **Sudden worsening of pain** that is not relieved by painkillers
- **Increasing redness, swelling, or discharge** despite treatment
- **The white or grey spot on your cornea appears to be getting larger**
- **Severe sensitivity to light** that prevents you from opening your eye
- **New floaters, flashes of light, or a curtain/shadow across your vision**
- **Symptoms that do not improve after 48–72 hours of treatment**
- **You develop a fever** or feel generally unwell

Do not wait for your next appointment if you are concerned. Corneal ulcers can progress rapidly and can cause permanent vision loss. Early intervention is critical.

Follow-Up Appointments

Please attend any follow-up appointment recommended by your consultant, even if your eye feels better.

We need to check that the ulcer is healing properly, monitor for complications, and adjust your treatment if necessary.

- **Typical follow-up schedule:**
- **First 48–72 hours:** Daily or every other day
- **First 1–2 weeks:** Every few days
- **Ongoing:** Weekly or as directed until fully healed

If you cannot attend, please contact us as soon as possible to reschedule.

Long-Term Outlook

The outcome of a corneal ulcer depends on its size, depth, location, and how quickly treatment was started:

- **Small, superficial ulcers** may heal within 1–2 weeks with minimal scarring
- **Larger or deeper ulcers** may take several weeks to months to heal and may leave scarring that affects vision
- **Severe or untreated ulcers** can lead to:
 - Permanent corneal scarring and vision loss
 - Perforation of the cornea (a hole in the cornea)
 - Spread of infection inside the eye (endophthalmitis)
 - Need for corneal transplant surgery

Your ophthalmologist will discuss your individual prognosis and any additional treatments you may need, such as:

- **Ongoing lubricating drops** for dry eye
 - **Treatment for corneal scarring** (if vision is affected)
 - **Corneal transplant** (in severe cases)
 - **Management of underlying conditions** (dry eye, blepharitis, contact lens hygiene)
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Preventing Recurrence

To reduce the risk of future corneal ulcers:

- **Practice good contact lens hygiene** if you wear lenses (see above)
 - **Never sleep in contact lenses** unless specifically designed for extended wear
 - **Treat underlying eye conditions** such as dry eye, blepharitis, or eyelid problems
 - **Protect your eyes from injury**—wear safety glasses when appropriate
 - **Seek prompt treatment** for any eye injury, foreign body, or persistent redness
 - **Attend regular eye examinations**
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Contact Us

If you have any questions or concerns about your recovery, please contact your Veonet Ireland clinic:

T +353 (0)1 270 7888

E info@veonet-ireland.com

veonet-ireland.com

Opening hours:

Monday–Friday, 9.00 to 17.00

Out of hours number:

T +353 (0)1 270 7887

In an emergency, go to your local A&E.

Remember:

Your cornea has been through a serious injury, and healing takes time and strict adherence to treatment. Follow your medication schedule carefully, attend all follow-up appointments, and don't hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns.

We're here to support your recovery every step of the way.

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