



## Navigating Preservatives in Eye Care Together: A discussion guide for patients and eyecare professionals (ECP)

Are preservatives part of the dialogue during your appointments? This discussion guide will help you engage in meaningful conversations about preservatives in topical eye care treatments.

### ECP to Patient: starting the conversation

Many Americans rely on a combination of prescription and/or over-the-counter drops, leading to millions of drops reaching millions of eyes every day. Empowering patients to understand what they are putting in their eyes, and how to make informed choices where there are preservative-free options starts with a conversation.

Did you know that preservatives in eye drops can potentially cause or enhance harmful consequences on the tear film, cornea, conjunctiva, and even the trabecular meshwork<sup>1</sup>?

#### Questions for your patients



How often do you use your eye care products, and how long have you used them?



Have you experienced discomfort or irritation with your current eye care products?



Are you concerned about the long-term use of your eye care products?



Are you aware of the preservatives in your eye drops or other eye care medications?



Do you often experience stinging when applying topical eye drops? If so, does this lead you to use them less often than needed or prescribed?



Since you started using topical eye drops, have you noticed discomfort in your eye, and/or an overall change in your eye health?

### Patient to ECP: Curious About Preservatives in Your Eye Care Products?

Unsure about your eye drops? It's important to be proactive about your eye health. Asking the right questions can help you understand your options when it comes to preservatives in your prescription or over-the-counter eye drops.

Did you know that preservative-free (PF) medications for glaucoma have been shown to improve patient compliance and effectively control intraocular pressure<sup>1</sup>?

#### Questions for your ECP



How can preservatives affect my eye health in the long term?



Why should I care about preservatives in my current/future medication?



What preservatives are in my current eye drops or eye care products?



What are the benefits of using preservative-free eye care products?



Are there preservative-free alternatives available for my condition?



Can you recommend any specific preservative-free products for my needs?



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### Facts About preservatives in eye care

#### Common Preservatives



Preservatives in eye drops play a crucial role in minimizing the risk of contamination and preventing the introduction of harmful pathogens, such as bacteria, to the ocular surface. However, advancements in sterile processes and manufacturing, along with improved dropper and bottle technology, now enable the creation of sterile reservoirs for therapeutic agents that do not necessitate the use of preservatives [1].

Benzalkonium Chloride (BAK), Chlorhexidine, Thimerosal, Polyquaternium-1, Cetrimide, Sodium chlorite, Sodium perborate, Zinc chloride

#### Impact of BAK



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#### What if there aren't any preservative-free options available?



Although advancements are being made, there isn't always a preservative-free option available. Think about the number of preservatives across topical treatments and creating a change can have a positive impact. Patients mustn't avoid treatment to avoid preservatives but rather make informed choices where they can.

#### How do I know that it is a safe preservative-free option?



Prescription preservative-free formulations have been tested and demonstrated efficacy and safety by the FDA. Over-the-counter options should be purchased at legitimate retailers to ensure authenticity. Preservative-free topical formulations will likely be individually packaged or utilize specific bottles to ensure sterility and eye safety.