Punctum plugs

1. Before prescribing and fitting punctum plugs, you should familiarise yourself with the current management techniques for dry eye.

2. You should undertake training in using punctum plugs and in how to remove them.

3. You should take a full history with particular reference to any symptoms that would indicate that the patient would benefit from punctum plugs.

4. You should undertake any tests that are necessary to determine whether the patient is likely to benefit from the use of punctum plugs.

5. You should involve the patient in deciding whether they would like to be treated with punctum plugs. You should ensure that the patient understands the procedure as well as the benefits and risks.

6. If you are planning to fit soluble plugs, you should explain to the patient that their effect is only temporary and that the objective is to allow the effect of punctal occlusion to be assessed before definitive plugs are considered. You should also explain that porcine and bovine collagen is used in making some soluble punctum plugs.

7. Before you fit the punctum plugs, you must obtain written consent¹.

8. You should arrange to follow up the patient. Give the patient written advice about when to schedule a follow up visit and about what to do if they have new symptoms or an adverse reaction.

9. You should inform the patient’s GP that you have fitted the patient with punctum plugs².

10. You should ensure that you use appropriate aseptic and sterilisation techniques to ensure infection control³.

11. Keep full and accurate records⁴.


