

## ⊗ Washout periods vary significantly between glaucoma medications

### ***The Science behind the Tip***

Knowledge of the washout periods for topical medications is crucial for the evaluation of the effects of their withdrawal, of switching medications, or of filtration surgery and subsequent discontinuation of medical therapy. It also allows optimal timing of follow-up visits. Surprisingly few studies have been done. Generally, standard drugs have been studied and it is assumed that other drugs belonging to the same class of medication behave similarly. A wide variation among individuals exists in washout times for the longer acting topical medications.

It is important to note that prostaglandin analogues are extremely long acting. It can take 8 weeks before Xalatan<sup>®</sup> completely loses its activity.

Washout period	Class of medication	Standard drug	References
3 days	cholinergics	pilocarpine	source: EGS Guidelines 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition: Ch. 3, p 135
1 week	carbonic anhydrase inhibitors	dorzolamide (Trusopt <sup>®</sup> )	source: EGS Guidelines 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition: Ch. 3, p 133
up to 4 weeks	$\beta$ -blockers	timolol	Schlecht LP, Brubaker RF. The effects of withdrawal of timolol in chronically treated glaucoma patients. <i>Ophthalmology</i> . 1988;95:1212-6. Hong YJ, Shin DH, <i>et al</i> . Intraocular pressure after a two-week washout following long-term timolol or levobunolol. <i>J Ocul Pharmacol Ther</i> . 1995;11:107-12.
up to 5 weeks	$\alpha_2$ -agonists	brimonidine (Alphagan <sup>®</sup> )	Stewart WC, Holmes KT, Johnson MA. Washout periods for brimonidine 0.2% and latanoprost 0.005%. <i>Am J Ophthalmol</i> . 2001;131:798-9.
up to 8 weeks	prostaglandin analogues	latanoprost (Xalatan <sup>®</sup> )	