



# Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2025/042

Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha) 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose preservative free

Tier 2 – medium impact\*

Date of issue: 11/07/2025

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

## Summary

- Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha) 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose **preservative free** are out of stock until early October 2025.
- Ketorolac 0.5% eye drops, bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops, and nepafenac 1mg/ml and 3mg/ml eye drops remain available and can support increased demand (all contain preservative benzalkonium chloride).
- Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose) 0.1% eye drops, which also contain benzalkonium chloride, are currently out of stock until late July 2025, but can support increased demand once back in stock. Please refer to the [Medicines Supply Tool](#) for further information.
- Preservative free corticosteroid eye drops remain available.

## Actions Required

Prescribers should not initiate new patients on Voltarol® Ophtha 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose preservative free until the shortage has resolved and should liaise with pharmacy teams to reserve existing stock for patients considered unsuitable for preservative containing formulations.

For new patient initiations and existing patients who have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, prescribers should review on a case-by-case basis to determine suitability of switching to a **preservative containing** non-steroidal anti-inflammatory eye drop, and if suitable:

- consider prescribing ketorolac 0.5% eye drops or bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops or nepafenac (1mg/ml or 3mg/ml) eye drops; diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose) 0.1% eye drops will be another option once back in stock in late July 2025.
- when prescribing these products, refer to local formulary/guidance and treatment history, noting their use may lead to off label prescribing in some instances (see Supporting information and refer to SmPC for dosing, contraindications, cautions and excipients); and
- consider if measures to reduce risk of irritation in those prescribed a **preservative containing** preparation is needed, including switching other eyedrops being used to preservative free formulations, and the use of lubricating eye drops if eyes become itchy/dry.

If the above options are not suitable, specialist advice should be sought on management options, including appropriateness/safety of using **preservative free** corticosteroid eye drops.

\*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/>

## Supporting information

### Clinical Information

NSAID eye drops have a common mechanism of action but vary in their licensed indications and marketed uses. Of the licensed NSAID eyedrops, only Voltarol® Ophtha 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit doses are preservative free.

Product	Voltarol® Ophtha 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose preservative free	Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose	Ketorolac trometamol 0.5% w/v eye drops, solution	Yellox® 0.9 mg/ml eye drops solution	Nevanac® 1mg/ml and 3mg/ml eye drops suspension*
<b>Active ingredient</b>	Diclofenac		Ketorolac	Bromfenac	Nepafenac
<b>Licensed indication(s)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inhibition of peroperative miosis during cataract surgery</li> <li>2. Treatment of post-operative inflammation in cataract surgery</li> <li>3. Control of ocular pain/discomfort associated with corneal epithelial defects after excimer PRK surgery or accidental non-penetrating trauma</li> <li>4. Control of inflammation after Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty</li> <li>5. Relief ocular signs/symptoms of Seasonal Allergic Conjunctivitis</li> <li>6. Treatment of inflammation/ discomfort after strabismus surgery</li> <li>7. Treatment of ocular pain/discomfort after radial keratotomy</li> </ol>		Prophylaxis and reduction of inflammation and associated symptoms following ocular surgery	Treatment of postoperative ocular inflammation following cataract extraction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prevention and treatment of postoperative pain and inflammation associated with cataract surgery</li> <li>2. Reduction in risk of postoperative macular oedema associated with cataract surgery in diabetic patients</li> </ol>

\*Once-daily dosing with 3 mg/ml eye drops provides the same total daily dose of nepafenac as three-times-daily dosing with 1 mg/ml eye drops

Benzalkonium chloride is the most widely used preservative in eyedrops. It may have an adverse effect on the ocular surface in some patients, especially with use of multiple eye drops containing preservatives, and with chronic exposure, leading to pain and discomfort.

### Links to further information

[SmPC Voltarol® Ophtha Unit Doses](#)  
[SmPC Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose](#)  
[SmPC Ketorolac trometamol 0.5% eye drops](#)  
[SmPC Yellox® 0.9 mg/ml eye drops solution](#)  
[SmPC Nepafenac](#)  
[BNF Eye, allergy and inflammation](#)  
[NICE CKS Conjunctivitis – allergic](#)

## Enquiries

Enquiries from NHS Trusts in England should in the first instance be directed to your Specialist Pharmacy Service Regional Pharmacy Procurement Team, who will escalate to national teams if required.

REGION	Lead RPPS	Email	Associate RPPS	Email
Midlands	Andi Swain	<a href="mailto:andi.swain@nhs.net">andi.swain@nhs.net</a>	Dav Manku	<a href="mailto:Dav.Manku@uhb.nhs.uk">Dav.Manku@uhb.nhs.uk</a>

<b>East of England</b>	James Kent	<a href="mailto:james.kent@nhs.net">james.kent@nhs.net</a>	Tracy McMillan	<a href="mailto:tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net">tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net</a>
<b>London</b>	Jackie Eastwood	<a href="mailto:j.eastwood@nhs.net">j.eastwood@nhs.net</a>	Daniel Johnson	<a href="mailto:Daniel.Johnson@nhs.net">Daniel.Johnson@nhs.net</a>
<b>North East and Yorkshire</b>	David Allwood	<a href="mailto:davidallwood@nhs.net">davidallwood@nhs.net</a>	Penny Daynes	<a href="mailto:penny.daynes@nhs.net">penny.daynes@nhs.net</a>
<b>North West</b>	Richard Bateman	<a href="mailto:richard.bateman@liverpoolft.nhs.uk">richard.bateman@liverpoolft.nhs.uk</a>	Andy Stewart	<a href="mailto:Andrew.stewart@liverpoolft.nhs.uk">Andrew.stewart@liverpoolft.nhs.uk</a>
<b>South East</b>	Alison Ashman	<a href="mailto:Alison.Ashman@berkshire.nhs.uk">Alison.Ashman@berkshire.nhs.uk</a>	Melanie Renney	<a href="mailto:melanie.renney@berkshire.nhs.uk">melanie.renney@berkshire.nhs.uk</a>
<b>South West</b>	Danny Palmer	<a href="mailto:danny.palmer@uhbw.nhs.uk">danny.palmer@uhbw.nhs.uk</a>	Natalie Bryson	<a href="mailto:Natalie.Bryson@uhbw.nhs.uk">Natalie.Bryson@uhbw.nhs.uk</a>

### **Scotland**

[nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot)

### **Wales**

[MedicinesShortages@gov.wales](mailto:MedicinesShortages@gov.wales)

### **Northern Ireland**

[RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net)

All other organisations should send enquiries about this notice to the DHSC Medicine Supply Team quoting reference number MSN/2025/042

Email: [DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk).