

**Over the counter artificial tears effective for dry eye syndrome**

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<b>Clinical Question</b>	How effective are over the counter (OTC) artificial tear drops in the treatment of dry eye syndrome?
<b>Bottom Line</b>	Comparing between classes of OTC artificial tears, and compared with no treatment or placebo, OTC artificial tears were effective at treating dry eye syndrome, and were generally safe, although not without side effects (blurred vision, ocular discomfort and foreign body sensation). 0.2% polyacrylic acid-based artificial tears were consistently more effective at treating dry eye syndrome than 1.4% polyvinyl alcohol-based artificial tears in two trials assessing this comparison (175 participants). All other included artificial tears produced contradictory between-group results or found no between-group differences.
<b>Caveat</b>	The overall completeness of the included trials was limited by factors like being short-term, incomplete investigator masking, industry support bias, and incomplete data reporting. Thus, the overall quality of the evidence was low.
<b>Context</b>	OTC artificial tears historically have been the first line of treatment for dry eye syndrome and dry eye-related conditions like contact lens discomfort, yet currently little is known regarding the overall efficacy of individual, commercially available artificial tears.
<b>Cochrane Systematic Review</b>	<a href="#">Pucker AD et al. Over the counter (OTC) artificial tear drops for dry eye syndrome. Cochrane Reviews, 2016, Issue 2. Art. No.: CD009729.DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD009729.pub2.</a> This review contains 43 studies involving 3,497 participants.

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