

Prostaglandin Analogs and Prostaglandins for the Treatment of Glaucoma

While there is no cure for glaucoma, it can be controlled with proper management.

Elevated **intraocular pressure (IOP)** can damage the optic nerve, which can lead to vision loss. Treatment for glaucoma focuses on lowering IOP to a level that is unlikely to cause further optic nerve damage. This is known as the “target pressure” or “goal pressure.” The target pressure differs from individual to individual. Your target pressure may change during your course of treatment.

If you have glaucoma, your ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.) may prescribe medication to lower your eye pressure. There are many more choices for topical treatment of glaucoma today than there were only a few years ago. Your ophthalmologist has chosen to use a **prostaglandin analog** or **prostaglandin** medication to treat your glaucoma.

How do prostaglandin analogs or prostaglandins work?

Prostaglandin analogs and prostaglandins lower IOP by increasing the outflow of the aqueous humor, the fluid made continuously by the eye. All of these medications are taken once a day, except for Rescula, which is taken twice per day.

What are the prostaglandin analog and prostaglandin medications?

- latanoprost (Xalatan)
- bimatoprost (Lumigan)
- travoprost (Travatan)
- unoprostone (Rescula)

Possible side effects of prostaglandin analogs or prostaglandins

All medications, including eyedrops, can have side effects. Some people taking these eyedrops may experience

- redness of the eye;
- darkening of the iris (the colored part of the eye); this color change occurs slowly and may not be noticeable for months or even years;
- increased growth, thickness, and pigmentation of the eyelashes;
- eye irritation or itching;
- blurred vision;
- darkening of the eyelid skin;
- muscle aches (rare); and

- headaches (rare).

Patients with a history of uveitis (inflammation in the eye), ocular herpes infection, or swelling in the retina (called cystoid macular edema) should use this medication with caution. If you have a history of any of these conditions, please discuss it with your doctor.

Medication tips

For each medication that your ophthalmologist prescribes, make sure you understand the following:

- the name of the medication;
- how to take it;
- how often to take it;
- how to store it;
- if you can take it with your other medications (make sure all of your doctors know about all the different medications you take, including any nonprescription medications);
- what the possible side effects may be;
- what you should do if you experience side effects; and
- what you should do if you miss a dose.