



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2026/034

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

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 30/07/2026

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha) 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose **preservative-free** is out of stock until mid-January 2027.
- Diclofenac (Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose) 0.1% eye drops will be discontinued by the end of October 2026 and cannot support any increased demand.
- Ketorolac 0.5% eye drops, bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops, and nepafenac (Nevanac®) 1mg/ml eye drops remain available and can support increased demand (all contain the preservative benzalkonium chloride).
- Nepafenac (Nevanac®) 3mg/ml eye drops have been discontinued.
- Preservative-free corticosteroid eye drops remain available.

Actions Required

Prescribers should not initiate new patients on Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose unless the treatment course is expected to conclude before discontinuation at the end of October 2026.

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 resupply date, prescribers should review on a case-by-case basis to determine suitability of switching to a **preservative-containing** non-steroidal anti-inflammatory (NSAID) eye drops, and if suitable:

- consider prescribing ketorolac 0.5% eye drops, bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops, or nepafenac 1mg/ml eye drops ensuring to refer to SmPC for dosing, contraindications, cautions and excipients;
- consider whether measures to reduce the risk of ocular irritation are required in patients prescribed a preservative-containing preparation. This may include switching the patient's other eye drops to preservative-free formulations and recommending lubricating eye drops if patients experience ocular irritation, dryness or other ocular surface symptoms;

If the above options are not suitable, specialist advice should be sought regarding alternative anti-inflammatory management options, including whether **preservative-free** corticosteroid eye drops are clinically appropriate (see Supporting Information).

*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

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

Product	Voltarol® Ophtha 0.1% eye drops 0.3ml unit dose preservative-free	Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose 0.1% eye drops	• Acular® • Ketorolac trometamol 0.5% w/v eye drops, solution	• Bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops, solution • Yellox® 0.9 mg/ml eye drops solution	Nevanac® 1mg/ml eye drops suspension
Active ingredient	Diclofenac		Ketorolac	Bromfenac	Nepafenac
Licensed indication(s)	1. Inhibition of perioperative miosis during cataract surgery 2. Treatment of post-operative inflammation in cataract surgery 3. Control of ocular pain/discomfort associated with corneal epithelial defects after excimer PRK surgery or accidental non-penetrating trauma 4. Control of inflammation after Argon Laser Trabeculoplasty 5. Relief of the ocular signs/symptoms of Seasonal Allergic Conjunctivitis 6. Treatment of inflammation/discomfort after strabismus surgery 7. Treatment of ocular pain/discomfort after radial keratotomy		Prophylaxis and reduction of inflammation and associated symptoms following ocular surgery	Treatment of postoperative ocular inflammation following cataract extraction	1. Prevention and treatment of postoperative pain and inflammation associated with cataract surgery 2. Reduction in risk of postoperative macular oedema associated with cataract surgery in diabetic patients

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.

Preservative-free eye drops may be recommended if a patient is using eye drops more than 6 times a day, wears soft or hybrid contact lenses, has a chronic eye disease, or is on multiple preserved topical medication, has a preservative allergy, has ocular surface disease or inflammation, or if there is evidence of toxicity.

Links to further information

[SmPC Voltarol® Ophtha Unit Doses](#)

[SmPC Voltarol® Ophtha Multidose](#)

[SmPC Ketorolac 0.5% eye drops](#)

[SmPC Ketorolac trometamol 0.5% w/v eye drops, solution](#)

[SmPC Bromfenac 0.9mg/ml eye drops](#)

[SmPC Nevanac® 1mg/ml eye drops suspension](#)
[BNF Eye, allergy and inflammation](#)
[NICE CKS Conjunctivitis – allergic](#)

Enquiries

If you have any queries, please contact DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.