



**Object: withdrawal of preservatives from ophthalmic preparations to Preserve our Eyes not Our Drops!**

We are three patient associations: **Keratos** (<http://keratos.free.fr>), focusing on ocular surface diseases and lachrymal dysfunctions, **Gêneris** (<http://associationgeniris.free.fr>) concentrating on aniridia and other rare diseases of the iris and **Amalyste** (<http://www.amalyste.fr>) who supports Stevens-Johnson's sufferers. We gather members from France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Norway and the UK.

It is commonly accepted, on the basis of independent medical literature and studies, that the systematic use of preservatives in eyedrops, such as benzalkonium chloride (a toxic detergent, although by far not the only culprit), has a serious deleterious effect for all chronic diseases that require the frequent instillation of eyedrops (even in originally healthy corneas).

Medical literature is very abundant on this matter, and ophthalmologists themselves are more and more aware of such - at first frequently insidious - dangers and advise their patients to avoid using preserved eyedrops and prefer non-preserved options. Unfortunately, these are not always available.

Therefore, we would like to draw your attention to the fact that preservatives have forced many of our members to suspend their many treatments due to severe allergic reactions or intolerances, the apparition of punctuate keratitis (a very frequent symptom of preservative use) or corneal erosions, irritations and other lachrymal disturbances. Beyond the more manifest intolerances, it is the cytotoxic effect that we fear the most, considering that it will leave most members with either an inadequate therapeutic option or a deteriorated cornea. Again, medical literature confirms the experience of our members.

Our treatments are directly impacted by the availability non-preserved options or lack thereof. This is clearly unacceptable considering that these risks may be totally avoided by the use of special containers or single use vials. Please consider reading more on what exactly is at stake on the following website: <http://preservative.free.fr>

Some laboratories have taken the necessary steps to produce non-preserved ophthalmic preparations, whereas some others still don't abide by what should be the first rule in medicine first do not harm (especially considering that there are alternatives).

**Please ban preservatives used in ophthalmic preparations for the sake of our eyes.** In the meanwhile, medical authorities should impose the obligation of producing sufficient non-preserved eyedrops alternatives for each indication or molecule in order to provide alternatives for all patients.

**Please help us by signing this petition:**

