

Please let the study team know if you need an interpreter.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Clinical performance of SYSTANE® PRO and Thealoz® Duo



Formal Study title: Comparative clinical performance of SYSTANE® PRO and Thealoz® Duo preservative-free lubricating eye drops on symptoms of dry eye disease

Protocol number: UOA-HATS-001

Sponsor: University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Lead Study Clinician: Professor Jennifer P. Craig
Study Site: Department of Ophthalmology,
The University of Auckland
85 Park Road, Grafton, Auckland

Contact phone number: 09 923 8173
Ethics committee ref.: 2025 EXP 23510

Taking part in this research is your choice.

You do not have to take part. If you choose not to take part or withdraw from the study, your normal care will not be affected.

- You will be given time to decide whether you want to take part in this study.
- The study team will discuss the study with you and answer any questions you have before you decide.
- You may talk to family, whānau, friends, or healthcare providers before you decide.
- If you have private medical insurance, you may wish to check whether this study will impact your cover.
- If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign the Consent Form. You will also be given an electronic or a hard copy of this information sheet and the signed consent.
- If you change your mind about taking part, you can withdraw from the study at any time by telling the study team.
- There may be no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study, and there may be risks of injury or illness.

This study will assess clinical performance of two new preservative free lubricating eye drops for dry eye disease

You may not experience any direct health benefits from the study treatment, and while the risk is low, there is a possibility of experiencing a treatment-related reaction

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a study designed to assess the clinical performance of two dry eye lubricating drops.

Dry eye disease is often treated with lubricating eye drops. Attributing to its increasing prevalence and multifactorial nature, several newer, advanced lubricating eye drops are often introduced. This study will evaluate the clinical performance of two such newly introduced eye drops.

The eye drops used in the present study are *SYSTANE® PRO* and *Thealoz® Duo*, both are not currently available in New Zealand, which means they are not Medsafe approved and, as such are investigational, however they are FDA approved and have been used as over-the-counter eye drops in other international markets such as the US and the UK. Studies like this help understand the clinical performance of these newer drops and provide clinicians with important information on their performance.

What is the aim of this study?

Topical lubricating eye drops remain the most commonly used approach for managing dry eye disease. Effective dry eye management enhances quality of life and helps protect the ocular surface from damage. Due to the high prevalence of DED and the growing demand for improved treatment options, the development of new and innovative products is vital in seeking to address the condition more effectively.

While novel products may have a strong rationale and show potential, building a strong scientific foundation of evidence on their clinical efficacy over a range of patient subtypes and severity, and relative to other market-leading formulations is crucial to support clinicians in making informed management decisions.

Hence this study plans to evaluate the effectiveness of the newly launched *SYSTANE® PRO* relative to *Thealoz® Duo* in managing the symptoms of DED and to assess potential benefits in terms of tear film stability as well as assessing user preference and satisfaction.

This study looks at comparative clinical potential of these drops in improving symptoms of dry eye disease, including:

- if the symptoms of eye dryness are reduced by regular use of eye drops
- if health of the front surface of the eye has improved after regular use of eye drops
- is one eye drop better than other

What type of study is this?

Randomised

This means you will use both SYSTANE® PRO and Thealoz® Duo for 4 weeks each, however the assignment of which eye drops to try first is determined randomly (by chance) before the study starts.

Neither you nor the clinician applying for the therapy will be able to choose which eye-drop will be used first.

Double Blinded

This means that neither you nor the study investigator would know which eye drop is used first by you, but the study doctor can find out if needed in an emergency.

You can find out which eye drop you used first after the study has ended.

How is the study designed?

Study Sites

This study is being run in New Zealand only, all the visits are in-person and will take place at our clinic in Grafton.

Participants

It will involve 82 people with dry eye disease.

Study Duration

You will be in this study for 8 weeks.

Study Visits

You will have up to 4 scheduled study visits over the course of 8 weeks. The first visit may be longer; all follow-up visits will be no longer than 50 minutes each. You may be asked to come for extra visits if needed.

How will I use the study product?

You will receive eye drops for use over 4 weeks. You are requested to use one drop per eye, four times a day, for 4 consecutive weeks. Additionally, you are requested to keep a record of eye drops used over this time in the printed calendar provided by us and tell us how long your eye felt comfortable after eye drop use. If you wish, you can use a smartphone-based reminder app (e.g., Medisafe) to help you set up daily reminders. After 4 weeks of regular use of one type of eye drop, your eyes will be assessed and you will be provided with the second eye drop, to be used in similar fashion over the next 4 weeks.

Who can take part in the study?

To take part in this study you must:	
✓	Age ≥18 years, able and willing to comply with study instructions
✓	Minimum of 6 months since onset of self-reported DED
✓	Dry eye diagnosis according to the TFOS DEWS III diagnostic criteria (this will be tested in the clinic)

You cannot take part in this study if you have:	
✗	Non-normal lid architecture affecting lid closure/blink
✗	No sensation in the central front surface of the eye (anaesthetic cornea)
✗	Active ocular allergies or history of frequent ocular allergies
✗	Severe dry eye disease
✗	Inability or unwillingness to commit to 8 weeks trial
✗	Unwillingness or inability to refrain from topical eye drop use for ≥ 24 hours prior to baseline visit
✗	Unwillingness or inability to refrain from topical eye drop use for and ≥12 hours prior to subsequent study visits
✗	Unwillingness to restrict topical eye drop use to only the study tear supplement
✗	Patients who are using other ophthalmological drops of any kind
✗	Unwillingness to be advised of incidental findings
✗	Wear of contact lenses within 1 week of study commencement or during the study
✗	Warm compress therapy, unless initiated ≥ 3 months prior to study enrolment and performed regularly and maintained at the same frequency throughout the course of the trial
✗	Punctal plugs, unless non-dissolvable (silicone plugs or cautery of ≥ 3 months duration)

✗	History of in-office therapies for dry eye disease such as thermal pulsation or light therapy in the last 12 months
✗	History of ocular surgery (such as refractive or cataract surgery) in either eye within 6 months of the screening visit
✗	History or presence of any ocular disorder or condition in either eye that would likely interfere with the interpretation of the study results or patient safety. This includes but is not limited to significantly reduced visual acuity ($\leq 20/200$), significant corneal or conjunctival scarring, pterygium or nodular pinguecula; current ocular infection or inflammation unrelated to dry eye; anterior (epithelial) basement membrane corneal dystrophy or other clinically significant corneal dystrophy or degeneration; ocular herpetic infection
✗	Differential diagnosis according to TFOS DEWS III Diagnostic Methodology report
✗	A systemic condition or disease considered unstable or judged by the investigator to be incompatible with participation in the study (including but not limited to current systemic infection, uncontrolled autoimmune disease, uncontrolled immunodeficiency disease, history of myocardial infarction)
✗	Known pregnancy, where associated hormonal variations over the study period might interfere with the study outcomes

What will taking part in the study involve?

Screening

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign the consent section at the end of this form before any study procedures are performed. The study team will check whether you meet all the criteria to take part. This is called Screening.

- This occurs over the phone and then in the clinic during your first visit.
- Your eligibility to take part will be confirmed once the screening checklist has been completed. If you are not eligible, no further testing will be performed.

Intervention and Follow-up (8 weeks)

Study data will be conducted in 3 in-person clinical visits over the course of 8 weeks. After confirming your eligibility, in your first clinical study visit, your eye health and dry eye status will be assessed, and you will be dispensed one bottle of eye drops (study product) to be applied 4 times a day for 4 weeks. You will also be given a compliance calendar to mark your daily eye drop use. At the end of 4 weeks, you will come in for your second visit and all the assessments will be repeated. At this visit you will be provided with the second eye drop bottle and a similar compliance calendar. After using the 2nd eye drops for 4 weeks, you will return to the clinic for your final assessment.

The table below gives a summary of the assessments we will perform at each visit. You may be asked to come to extra visits if the study team thinks this is needed for

safety or other reasons. If your study clinician identifies any significant abnormal results during the study, they will (with your consent) inform your GP.

Early withdrawal visit

Participation is voluntary. If you decide you would like to withdraw from the study at any time, please let us know. The study team may request that you attend a final visit, to check it is safe for you to exit the study. You will also be requested to return any remaining study product received as part of this trial.

Study Assessments

Informed consent	You will be requested to read and sign an informed consent form before you take part.
Eligibility check	We will check that you qualify for the study.
History and demographics	We will review your medical and ocular history and medications as relevant to the study and record your age, sex, and ethnicity.
Questionnaires	You will answer some questions about your dry eye symptoms and experience of receiving the treatment. These questions can be answered on a printed form or can be answered via a smart phone or tablet. You will be shown how to do this during visits.
Physical examination	A study clinician will examine you. This may include checking your vision using a chart, checking your front surface of your eye, checking your tear film using non-contact devices (that do not touch the eye) and a clinical osmometer that assesses the salt levels in your tears. Coloured dye (non-toxic and non-stinging) allows examination of the eye's surface in detail. It is used in routine eye testing and is rapidly flushed by tears. In the event of overspill, transient staining of the eyelid skin can occur. This fades within a few hours.
Imaging	Focused and highly magnified images of each eye (from which you are not identifiable) will be captured during the visits.
Health and Medication Check	We will ask you about any changes in your health and any changes to your medications. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medications, herbal or homeopathic remedies, and nutritional supplements.

Study Visits

Study visit	Visit 1 (Screening and Baseline)	Visit 2	Visit 3
Visit length (approximate)	60 minutes	50 minutes	50 minutes
Informed consent	Yes	No	No
Eligibility check	Yes	No	No
History & demographics	Yes	No	No
Health & Medication Check	Yes	Yes	Yes
Imaging	Yes	Yes	Yes
Questionnaire(s)	Yes	Yes	Yes

What are my responsibilities during the study?

You should:	
✓	Be open and honest about your general and eye health
✓	Be willing to follow the study protocol and attend all visits
✓	Let us know if you experience any unexpected visual symptoms during the trial

You should not:	
✗	Use contact lenses even for occasional use during the study
✗	Undergo a light-based therapy for your eyes or skin/face during the study
✗	Take part in any other clinical trial during the study period

What are the possible benefits of the study?

- By participating in this study, you will receive an ocular surface assessment free of charge and have the opportunity to talk about dry eye in general with the researchers. Your dry eye outcomes can be discussed with clinically qualified members of the senior research team if desired. This is not a replacement for a specialist appointment and ongoing clinical care cannot be provided in the research setting. Referrals can be made if desired to the University's Dry Eye Clinic for ongoing review and advice.
- The treatment applied may benefit your dry eye disease. It will also provide you with an opportunity to participate in a scientific study which could help researchers better understand or develop management strategies for tackling dry eye. You will be offered \$50 in retail vouchers for completing the eligibility

screening on site (whether you are eligible or not) and, if you are eligible, an additional \$50 voucher per completed study visit in recognition of your time, participating in this research, up to a total of \$200 for all visits. You will be offered a voucher if an additional screening visit is deemed necessary by the investigator.

What are the possible risks of the study?

The risk of harm during the clinical assessments is minimal and is the same level of risk you would be exposed to during a conventional eye exam. The investigators are trained to carry out these procedures safely. You will be given detailed instructions during the test procedures to minimize risks as far as possible. The investigators are trained to anticipate patient movements, however, in the unlikely event you move suddenly or unexpectedly during the test procedure, there is a small risk that contact could be made with your eye surface, and an abrasion could occur. This would usually take several hours to fully resolve, during which time your eyes could be slightly uncomfortable. The abrasion would be treated, and you would be followed according to standard clinical practice. The eye drops used in the study are commercially available in the international market as over the counter eye drops. If you experience any unexpected reaction to the use of the drops, please stop using them immediately and contact the researchers or your health care provider for advice.

Very common (seen in at least 10 in 100 people)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Common (seen in 1 - 10 in 100 people)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Uncommon (seen in less than 1 in 100 people)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Rare (seen in less than 1 in 1000 people)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there are no active ingredients in the eye drops used in this study, some people may develop an allergic reaction. This will be managed by immediately ceasing product application and following standard care, which may involve referral to a specialist or emergency care.

Allergic Reactions

If you are allergic to anything, please tell us before you join the study.

Some symptoms of allergic reactions are listed below. Tell the study clinician straight away if you have any of these symptoms. If not treated promptly, an allergic reaction could become life-threatening:

- Rash
- Wheezing and difficulty breathing
- Dizziness and fainting
- Swelling around the mouth, throat, or eyes
- A fast pulse or sweating

Unknown risks

There may be risks of treatment with the eye drops used in the study that are not yet known. You could have a side effect that has not yet been reported.

New Information

If any new information about adverse effects related to the study becomes available during the study, that may have an impact on health, you will be notified. It is the investigators' responsibility to look after you with the best care possible.

Reproductive risks and contraception

There are no reported risks to a fetus or baby from topically applied lubricant eye drops for dry eye disease.

Will any costs be reimbursed?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study, nor will you be paid. You will still have to pay for any non-study related medical care.

You will be offered a petrol or retail voucher valued at \$50 for each completed visit to thank you for your time in participating in the study. This is equivalent to a cash payment and therefore is considered taxable income.

Free parking will be arranged for study participants attending clinical visits. If additional parking fees are incurred in the unlikely event of the University Clinic parking being unavailable at your appointment time, these will be reimbursed on submission of receipt(s). Such reimbursement is not subject to taxation.

What if something goes wrong?

If you were injured in this study, you would be eligible to apply for compensation from ACC just as you would be if you were injured in an accident at work or at home. This does not mean that your claim will automatically be accepted. You will have to lodge a claim with ACC, which may take some time to assess. If your claim is accepted, you will receive funding to assist in your recovery.

If you have private health or life insurance, you may wish to check with your insurer that taking part in this study won't affect your cover.

What will happen to my samples?

- There are no retained tissue or tear samples collected from you in this study

What will happen to my information?

We will collect information (data) about you and your study participation. We only collect information needed for the study, to contact you or identify your medical records. You cannot take part in the study if you do not want us to collect any of this information.

Although efforts will be made to protect your privacy, absolute confidentiality of your information cannot be guaranteed. Even with coded and anonymized information, there is no guarantee that you cannot be identified. The risk of people accessing and misusing your information (e.g. making it harder for you to get or keep a job or health insurance) is currently very small but may increase in the future as people find new ways of tracing information. Your anonymized information (with no linking codes) may be used in future unspecified scientific research with overseas collaborators that directly addresses this research question or is being undertaken to improve dry eye care for patients more broadly. Other countries may have lower levels of data protection than New Zealand. The New Zealand researcher will be involved in decisions made about the use of your information, as there is a recognised risk that overseas researchers may work with information in a way that is not culturally appropriate for New Zealanders. Anonymised data cannot be accessed, corrected, or withdrawn, and return of individual results is not possible.

Identifiable information – this information traces directly to you.	
Examples?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your name and contact details (so we can get in touch with you).
How is it stored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper: under restricted access at the Ocular Surface Laboratory, separate from the clinical data, until the end of the study, then at a secure storage facility.• Electronic: securely on University of Auckland servers
Who has access?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local study staff that perform your study assessments• Your GP / usual doctor [if needed]• Study monitors, to make sure data are collected properly• Study auditors (see below)• Representatives from the Sponsor if you make a compensation claim for study-related injury. Identifiable information is required to assess your claim
How long is it kept?	For at least 10 years

Coded information – this information is labeled only with your unique study ID	
Examples?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All clinical information that is loaded into the study database
How is it stored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On a secure electronic server that complies with New Zealand data security guidelines

Who has access?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research team, Sponsor and other companies working with or for the Sponsor • Regulatory or other governmental agencies worldwide.
How long is it kept?	For at least 10 years

Anonymized information – <i>cannot be traced back to you</i>	
Examples?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that has had the unique ID code removed .
How is it stored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a secure database
Who has access?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access is not restricted, but is made available only as approved by the PI
How long is it kept?	For at least 10 years

Extra information about my data

The Coordinating Investigator may need to share your identifiable information in the rare event of a serious threat to public health or safety, or to the life or health of you or another person, OR if the information is required in certain legal situations.

Audits: The study may be audited. Audits make sure studies are being carried out properly. Auditors need access to your identifiable study data and relevant health records to do this. Audits may be done by the Sponsor or the approving Ethics Committee.

Data Access: You have the right to request access to information about you held by the research team, including the results of tests and procedures. You also have the right to request that any information you disagree with is corrected.

Study Withdrawal: You can ask the study team to stop collecting information about you at any time. This will end your participation in the study. Information collected up until this point will continue to be used, to protect the quality of the study.

Data Storage: After the study, your identifiable data will be stored for at least 10 years in a secure storage facility. Your coded and anonymized data will be stored indefinitely on secure electronic servers. All storage will comply with local and/or international data security guidelines.

Data Risks

Although efforts will be made to protect your privacy, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. There is a risk that people may access or use your information in ways that you may not be acceptable to you.

Data sent overseas will be governed by overseas laws. These may not give as much protection as New Zealand laws.

Māori Data

Māori data is considered taonga. Māori data sovereignty permits Māori organizations to access coded Māori data, to support Māori development aspirations.

Could the study end earlier than planned for me?

If you wish to withdraw from the study, please let us know. We may ask if you could complete some end-of-study assessments if you withdraw early.

We may withdraw you from the study if we believe it is not in your best interests to continue. We will discuss any withdrawal decisions with you and provide health care advice where appropriate.

Other reasons that you may be withdrawn from the study are:

- You need treatment that is not allowed in this study
- You did not follow the instructions for the study
- The study has stopped
- You have a serious reaction or illness or injury that is not related to the study

Can I find out the results of the study?

Information relating to this study, such as a summary of results, will be available at <https://www.anzctr.org.au> and on a public website (<https://www.ocularsurfacelab.com/>) describing research outcomes from ocular surface research projects conducted at the University of Auckland in the future.

You can choose to be sent a copy of the study results once the study is over. You can select this in the consent form below. Please note that the study outcomes may not be available immediately after data collection is completed, as data analysis and report writing can take several months.

Who is funding the study?

This study is an investigator-initiated clinical trial, which has received funding but is not sponsored by Alcon, USA. This means that University of Auckland is the sponsor and the principal investigator of the study is responsible for the study design, conduct, analysis and reporting of the outcomes. None of these are influenced by the funders.

Data and samples that lead to discoveries and inventions, or the development of a commercial product, will be owned by the University of Auckland, New Zealand. You will not have rights to ownership or benefit financially.

The study team will only receive their ordinary wages for conducting this research.

Who has approved this study?

This study has been approved by an independent group of people called a Health and Disability Ethics Committee (HDEC), who check that studies meet established ethical standards. The Central Health and Disability Ethics Committee (HDEC) has approved this study.

Who do I contact for more information?

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the study at any stage, you can contact:

Name: Professor Jennifer P Craig, Principal Investigator
Phone: 09 923 8173
Email: jp.craig@auckland.ac.nz

Name: Professor Charles NJ McGhee, Head of Department of Ophthalmology
Phone: 09 923 6712
Email: c.mcghee@auckland.ac.nz

If you want to talk to someone who isn't involved with the study, you can contact an independent health and disability advocate on:

Phone: 0800 555 050
Fax: 0800 2 SUPPORT (0800 2787 7678)
Email: advocacy@advocacy.org.nz
Website: <https://www.advocacy.org.nz/>

For Māori cultural support please contact:

Name: Misty Edmonds, CEO Iwi United Engaged, Ltd.
Phone: 027 489 0804
Email: misty@iue.net.nz

You can also contact the health and disability ethics committee (HDEC) that approved this study on:

Phone: 0800 400 569 (Ministry of Health general inquiries)
Email: hdecs@health.govt.nz

CONSENT FORM

Clinical performance of SYSTANE® PRO and Thealoz® Duo



Formal Study title: Comparative clinical performance of SYSTANE® PRO and Thealoz® Duo preservative-free lubricating eye drops on symptoms of dry eye disease

Protocol number: UOA-HATS-001

Sponsor: University of Auckland, New Zealand

Lead Study Doctor: Professor Jennifer P. Craig
Study Site: The University of Auckland

Contact phone number: 09 923 8173
Ethics committee ref.: 21832

24-hour number 021 853 664

Please let your study doctor know if you need an interpreter.

I have read, or have had read to me, and I understand the Participant Information Sheet.

I have been given sufficient time to consider whether or not to take part in this study.

I have had the opportunity to use a legal representative, whānau/ family support or a friend to help me ask questions and understand the study.

I am satisfied with the answers I have been given regarding the study and understand I will be given a copy of this consent form and information sheet.

I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without this affecting my usual care.

I consent to the research staff collecting and processing my information, including information about my health.

I consent to my anonymized information being sent overseas for collaborative scientific research with the purpose of improving dry eye care in future

If I decide to withdraw from the study, I understand that the information collected about me up to the point when I withdraw may continue to be processed. Yes No

I consent to my GP or current provider being informed about my participation in the study. Yes No

I consent to my GP or current provider being informed of any significant abnormal results obtained during the study.

I agree to an approved auditor appointed by the New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committees, or other relevant regulatory authority or their approved representative reviewing my relevant medical records for the sole purpose of checking the accuracy of the information recorded for the study.

I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material which could identify me personally will be used in any reports on this study.

I understand the compensation provisions in case of injury during the study.

I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.

I understand my responsibilities as a study participant.

I wish to receive a summary of the results from the study. Yes No

If YES, my email contact details are as follows:

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's name:

Signature:

Date DD/MMM/YYYY:

Time (12 hours clock):: AM/PM

Declaration by member of the research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Investigator's name:

Signature:

Date DD/MMM/YYYY:

Time (12 hours clock):: AM/PM
