

Claims:

1. A punctal plug, comprising: a body having a first end, a second end, and a lateral surface extending between the two ends; and a cap adjacent to the first end of the body, a cap adjacent to the second end of the body, or caps adjacent to both the first and second ends of the body, wherein the or each cap comprise an active agent-containing material that contains at least one active agent and wherein one or both caps adhere to an end of the body via a biocompatible adhesive.
2. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1, wherein the lateral surface has an outer diameter that is circular in shape and a portion of the lateral surface has an outer diameter that is greater than that of the remainder of the lateral surface.
3. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the or each cap is comprised of a polymeric material that is at least partially water-soluble; a polymeric material that is biodegradable; or a polymeric material that is insoluble in water and non-biodegradable and the active agent passively diffuses from the or each cap.
4. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the portion of the lateral surface that has an outer diameter greater than that of the remainder of the lateral surface secures the punctal plug in the lacrimal canaliculus when the punctal plug is inserted in the lacrimal canaliculus.
5. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the or each cap further comprises a stem portion of a cap.
6. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein a portion of the or each cap is positioned within the body of the punctal plug and is screwed or clipped into the body of the punctal plug.
7. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the punctal plug is adapted such that a cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces an eye, upon insertion of the punctal plug into the lacrimal canaliculus thereby allowing the active agent to be released into the tear fluid of the eye.
8. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein when the punctal plug is adapted such that a cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces a nasolacrimal duct, thereby allowing the active agent to be released into the nasolacrimal duct.

9. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein when the punctal plug is adapted such that a cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces an eye, and another cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces a nasolacrimal duct, thereby allowing the active agent to be released into both the tear fluid of the eye and the nasolacrimal duct.
10. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising a collarette at the first end of the body, at least a portion of a cap is adjacent to the collarette, and the active agent is released into the tear fluid of the eye.
11. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 10, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is at least partially water-soluble, dissolves over time, and releases the active agent as it dissolves.
12. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 10, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is biodegradable, degrades over time, and releases the active agent as it degrades.
13. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 10, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is insoluble in water and non-biodegradable and the active agent passively diffuses from the cap.
14. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 13, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is removable.
15. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 14, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a flexible polymeric material and at least a portion of the cap extends beyond the collarette.
16. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 10, wherein the cap further comprises a stem portion.
17. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 16, wherein the stem portion of the cap is screwed or clipped into the body of the punctal plug.
18. The use of a punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 10, for delivering active agents into the lacrimal canaliculus of an eye.

Claims:

1. A punctal plug, comprising: a body having a first end, a second end, and a lateral surface extending between the two ends; and an external cap adjacent to the first end of the body, and an external cap adjacent to the second end of the body, wherein each cap comprises an active agent-containing material that contains at least one active agent and both caps adhere to an end of the body via a biocompatible adhesive and wherein the diameter of the cap is equal to or greater than the diameter of the lateral surface extending between the two ends.
2. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1, wherein the lateral surface has an outer diameter that is circular in shape and a portion of the lateral surface has an outer diameter that is greater than that of the remainder of the lateral surface.
3. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein each cap is comprised of a polymeric material that is at least partially water-soluble; a polymeric material that is bio-degradable; or a polymeric material that is insoluble in water and non-biodegradable and the active agent passively diffuses from each cap.
4. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the portion of the lateral surface that has an outer diameter greater than that of the remainder of the lateral surface secures the punctal plug in the lacrimal canaliculus when the punctal plug is inserted in the lacrimal canaliculus.
5. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein at least one cap further comprises a stem portion.
6. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein a portion of at least one cap is positioned within the body of the punctal plug and is screwed or clipped into the body of the punctal plug.
7. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein when the punctal plug is adapted such that one cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces an eye, and the other cap is located adjacent to the end of the punctal plug that faces a nasolacrimal duct, thereby allowing the active agent to be released into both the tear fluid of the eye and the nasolacrimal duct.

8. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising a collarette at the first end of the body, at least a portion of a cap is adjacent to the collarette, and the active agent is released into the tear fluid of the eye.
9. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 8, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is at least partially water-soluble, dissolves over time, and releases the active agent as it dissolves.
10. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 8, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is biodegradable, degrades over time, and releases the active agent as it degrades.
11. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 8, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a polymeric material that is insoluble in water and non-biodegradable and the active agent passively diffuses from the cap.
12. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 11, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is removable.
13. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 12, wherein the cap that is adjacent to the collarette is comprised of a flexible polymeric material and at least a portion of the cap extends beyond the collarette.
14. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 8, wherein the cap further comprises a stem portion.
15. The punctal plug as claimed in claim 14, wherein the stem portion of the cap is screwed or clipped into the body of the punctal plug.
16. The use of a punctal plug as claimed in claim 1 or claim 8, for delivering active agents into the lacrimal canaliculus of an eye.