

## MEDIA RELEASE

### New trial finds honey to be a superior treatment for dry eyes

**July 12, Melbourne:** For thousands of years communities have recognised the wound healing and anti-bacterial properties of honey.

Now, in a ground-breaking new trial, this powerful natural product has been proven to outperform standard treatments in relieving the symptoms of dry eyes.

The trial, published last month in Optometry Australia's journal, [Clinical and Experimental Optometry](#), indicated the honey treatment improved the dry eye condition and, unlike conventional lubricants, had an all-important anti-bacterial effect.

Patients in the trial were given Optimel Antibacterial Manuka Eye Gel or Optimel Manuka+ Dry Eye Drops, produced by Melcare. The patients who used the honey therapy reported their eyes felt better and not so 'gritty'. Most chose to continue using the honey treatments after the study concluded.

The project was specifically tested on meibomian gland disease (MGD) induced dry eye, the most common cause of dry eye, so it did not cover every type of dry eye.

Trial co-author, Associate Professor Katrina Schmid from Queensland University of Technology School of Optometry and Vision Science, said that while all treatments (including conventional lubricants) clinically and significantly improved dry eye, the honey therapies improved it the most and the gel was superior.

"It's a novel treatment for dry eye because it has both antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties and has a different mechanism from those of other products," said Prof Schmid.

"Practitioners can suggest it to patients and know with confidence that they will see a benefit and should experience significant improvements over two months.

"The trial has provided evidence of its benefits to patients with chronic, long-term and difficult to treat MGD,' she said.

CEO of [Melcare](#), Anthony Moloney, said "Response from optometrists in Australia has been quite outstanding and from patients, overwhelming. The drops do sting and it doesn't work for everyone but where it does work, it can be profound," he said.

Mr Moloney said that good eyelid hygiene, clean eyes and eyelid margins, should always be initial therapy but if lubricants did not manage the condition well, people could try the honey products.

"For most people with chronic dry eye which is difficult to manage, they will be suitable," he said.

### Don't put up with dry eyes

Optometry Australia's Simon Hanna, said, "Dry eye is a major public health problem which can have a serious impact on your quality of life – it's not a condition that should simply be put up with.

Mr Hanna, who is an optometrist, said that the first step in any treatment is having a comprehensive eye examination with an optometrist who can assist you with a correct diagnosis.

Mr Hanna said, dry eye may be exacerbated by many factors, including diabetes, sleep disorders and hormonal issues. Our reliance on digital devices, as well as time spent in the modern office, in front of computer screens and in air-conditioning are also contributing factors.

“Your optometrist can discuss with you the lifestyle factors which may be contributing to dry eye. They can also let you know if your condition is suited to the new honey therapy or conventional treatments like artificial tears or other lubricating eye drops,” Mr Hanna said.

To find an optometrist in your local area visit [www.goodvisionforlife.com.au](http://www.goodvisionforlife.com.au).

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