

## **Cold weather dries eyes**

**Cambridge UK, 21 January 2013** – “We all know our lips dry up when we are in a cold environment, but some people don’t know their eyes can dry out too”, says Chris Miller of Cambridge-based Altacor, a specialist ophthalmic products company.

Low temperatures and icy winds can dry out our eyes causing them to water as our tear glands try to compensate. Chris continues “We recommend wearing protective glasses or using lubricant eye drops without preservatives”. The multi-use 0.5ml vials of Clinitas Soothe are perfect to carry alongside your lip balm on a cold day.

However, it isn’t just the cold temperatures that will affect our eyes this winter. The World Health Organisation warns that fresh snow can reflect as much as 80 per cent of the ultra violet light that hits it. This exposure is much greater than the 15 per cent reflected from a warm sandy beach.

Additionally, a study published in Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science found that cold weather could compromise the eye’s lipid film, even in healthy individuals with no previous dry eye problems. This demonstrates that regardless of how healthy our eyes are now, they need more protection in colder weather.

Chris says a drop in temperature, combined with increased exposure to UV light can cause damage to our eyes.

“The outermost layer of the eye’s lipid film is responsible for protecting the corneal epithelium against the evaporation of aqueous tears. When the temperature of this layer starts to fall, oily components of the film cause it to shrink and become stiffer. This significantly reduces the lubricant properties of the film, and as the temperature decreases, these changes become more and more severe.

“Even people without any history of dry eye can be significantly affected by these conditions, so those individuals who regularly experience dry eye symptoms need to take extra preventative care in the cold weather. Using a gel before they go to sleep, can help improve the quality of their tears.”

Mild symptoms of dry eye include: dry, gritty or sore eyes, red eyes and eyelids that stick together when you wake up. If the condition is allowed to develop, more severe symptoms can develop such as extreme sensitivity to light, very red and painful eyes as well as a deterioration to your vision.

As a precaution, Chris suggests wearing protective glasses outdoors and using Clinitas Soothe to help keep the eyes refreshed. Bathing the eyes when you get home and gently massaging them to stimulate the oil producing glands can also help.



Using preservative-free eye drops is safe even if you are on other medication or wear contact lenses. Clinitas Soothe has a high concentration of sodium hyaluronate, which provides a long period of relief. It also comes in resealable vials ready for a quick application as needed throughout the day. Clinitas Soothe is available from opticians and pharmacies nationwide. The sister product Clinitas is available on prescription from your doctor.

###

## **Contacts**

Dr Fran Crawford, CEO +44 (0)1223 421411

## **About Altacor**

Altacor is a specialty ophthalmology company with a portfolio of marketed pharmaceutical products and a diverse development pipeline. The Company's portfolio is focused on ocular surface diseases, glaucoma/glaucoma surgery and retinal diseases. The Company differentiates its products primarily through formulation or reprofiling existing compounds with established clinical activity and systemic safety.

Altacor has five products marketed in the UK and Ireland which are commercialised through its own sales and marketing organisation and network. Clinitas and Clinitas GEL are prescription products for the treatment of moderate dry eye conditions and are gaining acceptance by clinicians nationwide. The Clinitas range, comprising Clinitas Hydrate, Clinitas Soothe and Clinitas Ultra 3, are also for treating the major causes of dry eye, and are sold to the retail market via pharmacists and opticians.

Altacor is developing its Blepharitis range of products to loosen and remove Meibomian secretions, which underlie blepharitis, and an 'AREDS' formula chocolate for the maintenance of healthy vision. AREDS is a well-established formula that slows the progression of age-related macular degeneration.