

Ophthalmology department

# Adenoviral conjunctivitis

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

This leaflet has been designed to give you information about adenoviral conjunctivitis and answer some of the questions that you or those who care for you may have. It is not meant to replace the discussion between you and your medical team but aims to help you understand more about what is discussed. If you have any questions about the information below, please contact us.

### What is adenoviral conjunctivitis?

Conjunctivitis is an infection of the conjunctiva – which is the mucous membrane covering the white part of the eye called sclera.

A virus similar to the one that causes coughs and colds also causes adenoviral conjunctivitis. It is very contagious and spreads quickly to other people unless you are very careful with your hygiene.

### What are the signs/symptoms?

You may have some or all of the following:

- swollen eye lids
- red eye lids
- feeling you have grit or sand in your eye when you blink
- watery discharge
- enlarged glands in the neck or around the ear
- flu-like symptoms
- slight sensitivity to light

### Treatment

As with coughs and colds there is no cure and the infection must run its course. However, you may be given some lubricating eye drops to help ease the discomfort.

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In rare cases you will be given antibiotic drops to prevent a secondary infection, but this is not related to the virus.

In certain instances where there is involvement of the cornea (clear window at the front of the eye), steroid drops may be required and further monitoring may be required.

You can also use a clean flannel soaked in warm water to remove sticky discharge and secretions from your eyelids

The infection can take several weeks to clear completely, and often will get much worse before it starts to get better. So, please do not worry.

Usually, a follow up appointment is not required as the infection will get better by itself. However, if the conjunctivitis is very severe or affects the front of the eye called the cornea, a follow up appointment at the clinic may be arranged.

## Contact lenses

You should not wear contact lenses until the symptoms have cleared completely.

## Is there anything I can do to help myself?

If you are particularly sensitive to light, wearing dark glasses may help.

**The virus is highly contagious** and anything in contact with your tears is at risk of infection.

Please use your own and do not share the following:

- towel
- flannel
- pillow case and change them as often as possible

**Do not touch your face** and **wash your hands frequently**.

When using ointment and eye drops **do not** let the nozzle touch your eyes or eye lashes.

**You may need some time off work and children should not go to school for at least one week or until the eye no longer looks red or sore.**

## Who can I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or concerns please call:

**Ophthalmology emergency department:** 020 3312 3245

**Western Eye Hospital eye clinic:** 020 3312 3236

**Charing Cross Hospital eye clinic:** 020 3311 0137

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## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: [imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)

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