

Your instant second opinion

[Back to Top](#)

MENU

- 
- [Resources](#)
  - [My BMJ Best Practice](#)
  - [EBM toolkit](#)
  - [BMJ Clinical Evidence](#)
  - [Patient leaflets](#)
  - [BMJ Portfolio](#)
  - [Help](#)
- 

## Acute conjunctivitis

Last updated: Jan 27, 2017

### Epidemiology

---

Conjunctivitis commonly affects males and females of all ages. [1] It is usually treated by general practitioners and is estimated to account for almost 1% of all primary care consultations. [2] In England there are 13 to 14 cases per 1000 people each year. [3] [4] The incidence rate appears to be higher in children <1 year old (80 cases per 1000 patient-years) than in children >4 years of age (12 cases per 1000 patient-years). [5] Up to 1.3% of the US population has been reported to have the condition. [6] In the US, 3% of all accident and emergency department visits are ocular related, with 30% of these due to conjunctivitis. Two percent of all visits to primary care physicians are for eye conditions, with 54% of these being either conjunctivitis or corneal abrasion. [7] Similarly, seasonal conjunctivitis represents more than 90% of cases of allergic conjunctivitis. [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] Perennial conjunctivitis is less common, but 80% of these patients have seasonal flares. [8] Atopic allergic conjunctivitis disease is more common in adults, and vernal allergic conjunctivitis (a more severe, chronic form of allergic conjunctivitis) is more common in boys. Atopic and vernal conjunctivitis together represent 2% of ocular allergic disease; atopic dermatitis occurs in 3% of the population, and 25% of these have ocular involvement. [9] [10] [11] [12]

The prevalence of vernal keratoconjunctivitis in Europe ranges from 1.2 to 10.6 cases per 10,000 population, although the prevalence of associated corneal complications is much lower (0.3-2.3 per 10,000 population). [13]

Bacterial conjunctivitis is more common in children, and viral conjunctivitis is more common in adults. Of infectious conjunctivitis, 42% to 80% is bacterial, 3% is chlamydial, and 13% to 70% is viral. [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] Viral conjunctivitis represents up to 50% of all acute conjunctivitis in primary care. [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] Ocular cicatricial pemphigoid and neoplastic conjunctivitis are rare.

Use of this content is subject to our [disclaimer](#)

© BMJ Publishing Group Limited 2017. All rights reserved.

京ICP备15042040号-3

TIP! Make sure you log in or register to track CME / CPD activity.

Share this page

