



CLINICAL GUIDELINE

Bacterial Conjunctivitis Management

A guideline is intended to assist healthcare professionals in the choice of disease-specific treatments.

Clinical judgement should be exercised on the applicability of any guideline, influenced by individual patient characteristics. Clinicians should be mindful of the potential for harmful polypharmacy and increased susceptibility to adverse drug reactions in patients with multiple morbidities or frailty.

If, after discussion with the patient or carer, there are good reasons for not following a guideline, it is good practice to record these and communicate them to others involved in the care of the patient.

| | |
|--|--|
| Version Number: | 7 |
| Does this version include changes to clinical advice: | No |
| Date Approved: | 24 th June 2025 |
| Date of Next Review: | 30 th June 2027 |
| Lead Author: | David Lockington |
| Approval Group: | Ophthalmology Clinical Governance Subcommittee |

Important Note:

The Intranet version of this document is the only version that is maintained. Any printed copies should therefore be viewed as 'Uncontrolled' and as such, may not necessarily contain the latest updates and amendments.

Conjunctivitis

Commonly irritated red eye with mainly normal vision

| | Bacterial | Viral | Allergic | Toxic |
|--------------|---------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Main symptom | Sticky | Watery | Itchy | Photophobic |
| Laterality | Unilateral | Starts in one, spreads to other | Bilateral | Depends on use of multiple drops |
| Swabs? | If purulent | Unnecessary in acute phase | No | No |
| Treatment | Topical antibiotics | Cool compresses Lubricants Strict hygiene | Cool compresses Lubricants Sodium Cromoglycate | Stop all drops Lubricants |

Eye Swabs

- ❖ Don't use routinely (likely to be negative), and unnecessary in obvious pathology eg dendrite
- ❖ Useful in chronic cases to identify chlamydial or adenoviral conjunctivitis
- ❖ Ensure patient is informed re possible outcome of swabs and given information leaflet
- ❖ Check correct phone number to contact patient if positive result
- ❖ If positive Chlamydia result, phone Sandyford health advisor for treatment advice and follow up appointment. Then phone patient and ask them to come into Casualty for results.
- ❖ Do not leave results as an answer phone message!

*Provided by- Dr. D. Lockington Reviewed 14th June 2022 ; 24th June 2025
Next review 30th June 2027*