

What is Acanthamoeba Keratitis (AK)?

Ophthalmology

Introduction:

This leaflet gives information for patients who have been diagnosed with Acanthamoeba Keratitis

What is Acanthamoeba keratitis (AK)?

AK is a serious infection of cornea. Contact lens wear is the leading risk factor of AK. Acanthamoeba parasites are increasingly recognised as a major cause of keratitis in contact lens wearers.

Cause of Acanthamoeba keratitis

- Factors that increase the risk of contracting AK include using contaminated tap water on contact lenses and using non sterile solutions to clean the lenses
- Poor hand hygiene while changing contact lenses
- Swimming while wearing contact lenses and using a dirty lens case to store the lenses
- Injury
- Using tap water to rinse storage case
- Inadequate disinfection.

Symptoms of AK

- Pain
- Visual loss / blurred vision
- Foreign body sensation
- Redness
- Photophobia.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- **Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available**
- **If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111**
- **Keep the environment clean and tidy**
- **Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.**

Treatment of AK

AK can be difficult to treat. Diagnosis can only be confirmed by clinical features, corneal swab (PCR) and confocal microscopy (corneal scan). If not promptly treated, AK can cause permanent loss of vision.

The following treatments can be used:

- Anti-acanthamoeba treatment (eye drops)
- Antibiotics for secondary bacterial infection.

You should refrain from wearing contact lenses. Your Ophthalmologist will advise and discuss the further management of your condition.

How AK can be prevented?

- Follow your optician's advice regarding care of your contact lenses
- Never use tap water with your contact lenses
- Do not swim, shower or use a hot tub while wearing contact lenses
- Soak your lenses in fresh disinfectant solution every night
- Always wash and dry your hands before handling lenses
- Cleanliness and proper care are equally important for contact lens cases.

Never leave / stop treatment without consulting your eye doctor.

There is always a risk of infection with contact lens wear.

What should I do if I need advice or information?

Staff in Ophthalmology are here to help and are contactable as follows:

Eye Referral Unit

01902 695805

Monday to Friday 8:00 - 17:00 hours

Weekends 8:00 - 15:00 hours

Mary Jones Ward

01902 695801

Monday to Friday 7:00 - 17:30 hours

Outpatients Department

01902 695831

Monday to Friday 8:30 - 16:30 hours

Outside these hours, please attend the main Emergency Department (ED) or contact NHS Direct on telephone number 111.

References

<http://www.allaboutvision.com/contacts/acanthamoeba-keratitis.htm>, accessed 23/06/2015

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3072032>, accessed 23/06/2015

College of optometrists, Microbial Keratitis (Acanthamoeba sp.), Clinical management guidelines, version 9, 03/02/2012.

<http://www.eyecaretrust.org.uk/> accessed 7.7.17

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。