

OAKLEIGH EYE CENTRE

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ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS

This is a common condition which affects a significant percentage of our population. Adults and quite commonly young children and teenagers are affected.

Allergic conjunctivitis covers a broad spectrum of eye symptoms.

Mild Symptoms

Mild symptoms are most common and often in association with hay fever which tends to occur in spring and summer.

Severe Symptoms

Patients who have severe allergic conjunctivitis tend to have other allergic problems such as eczema and asthma.

In addition to the above symptoms, eye irritation, burning and grittiness are quite common. Vision can be affected in severe cases. Sometimes eyelid skin can be thickened and scaly due to eczema.

In severe cases, symptoms can occur **year-round** and are usually worse during spring and summer.

TREATMENT

Tends to settle once the allergic causes settle.

If you can identify environmental factors which make you worse you should avoid these. For example, household pets, gardening, mowing the grass and dust mites in carpets.

Mild cases of itching and redness often are improved with drops to be used as directed. These are for short periods and stopped when you feel better. You may need to resume drops if symptoms re-occur later.

If your hay fever is also playing up, it is worthwhile trying antihistamine tablets, which may improve your eye symptoms. It is important to discuss which medication is suitable with your family doctor and pharmacist.

In more severe cases, long term treatment is required to prevent the allergic response occurring and to control symptoms. Occasionally, a short course of special anti-inflammatory drops is needed to settle down inflammation and is also used for "flare ups".