



Review Article

Eye Flu, Sign Symptoms, Prevention and Control from Infection

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Abstract

Recently eye flu has attracted attention of health and health care workers because of day by day increasing in numbers of out-patient department (OPD) cases in government as well as in private hospitals. Taking into consideration the severity of the disease government has issued advisory for the schools indicating that if cases of eye flu increase in school children's online classes may be started. Person should take precaution if someone in the office or at home is having symptoms of eye flu.

Keywords: Eye flu, Viral conjunctivitis Sign Symptoms, Prevention of Flu

1. Introduction

Human influenza viruses are responsible for annual epidemics causing human disease that ranges from subclinical to life-threatening [1]. The potency for high infectivity of influenza viruses, as well as capacity to remain suspended in the air of the virus for sustained distance and duration results in increase in number of cases in short duration of time [2,3].

Several non-respiratory clinical features, including ocular (typically mild conjunctivitis) and gastrointestinal (typically diarrhea) depending on the severity of disease and causative strain; can also occur among infected individuals. Complications including secondary bacterial may also occur leading to pneumonia [4,5]. Eye flu cases are increasing day by day in rural as well as in urban areas of Uttar Pradesh. Advisory has been issued for schools if they have symptoms of eye flu to visit hospital or health care centres, after high rise in Eye Flu Cases by Health department at Agra [6].

Eye flu is also known as viral conjunctivitis. Students as well as parents should be made aware about the disease so that spread may be prevented. Among school children many cases of eye flu have been reported. To avoid spread of the disease the health department has also organized camps at Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Pinahat, and Lagner. More and more camps will be organized in other places also. About 100 patients having complaints with viral conjunctivitis are visiting daily in outpatient department (OPD) at Agra only.

Human influenza A viruses usually cause respiratory disease as the primary disease manifestation and mainly infect human beings through respiratory route resulting in public threat. The virus has capacity to use the eye as a portal of entry and cause ocular disease in human beings. However, whereas influenza viruses generally represent a respiratory pathogen and only occasionally cause ocular complications, the H7 virus subtype stands alone in possessing an ocular tropism [7].

Humidity due to rainy season, cases of infection of viral conjunctivitis and its spread very rapidly resulted in rise in cases of eye flu. On an average in some district hospital OPD, daily 70-80 per cent patients with viral conjunctivitis are visiting [6].

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2. Materials and Methods

Only recent study papers related to eye flu causative agent, spread and preventive measures, were reviewed for compilation of this article.

3. Symptoms

Main symptoms of eye flu include are itching, red eyes, swelling in eyelids and white discharge from the infected eye. This infection lasts for about a week and having originated with viral infection.

4. Prevention

As the mode of infection of virus is through contact with secretion of eye and respiratory droplets, therefore regular washing of towels, bed sheets and other clothes of the infected persons and must be separated to prevent the disease from spreading to other family members. If the number of cases increases to high online classes should be started. One should visit government hospital or a health centre immediately as soon as he or she observe symptoms of eye flu.

5. Recover from infection

Looking in to increased Eye flu prevalence these days in the monsoon. Common precautions/guidelines should be followed issued by public health authorities. However, some common general measures that can help in prevention of the spread of eye flu/viral infections these includes:

i. Good hygiene practices:

Hands should be washed frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after touching your, nose, eyes or mouth.

ii. Do not share personal items:

One should avoid sharing items that can spread virus such as towels, pillow cases, eye drops, or make-up with others as these items are main source of spread the infection.

iii. Clean and disinfect:

Things should be regularly clean and disinfected including surfaces that may come into contact with your eyes, e.g. eyeglasses, contact lenses and their cases.

iv. Proper contact lens care:

If person use to wear contact lenses, guidelines should be followed properly as recommended by the eye care professional.

v. Avoid rubbing your eyes:

Bacteria or viruses can be easily transferred by rubbing your hands to your eyes, causing an infection of eye.

vi. Use of tissues paper:

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when you cough or sneeze to prevent the spread of germs.

vii. Stay at home:

Person having symptoms of an eye infection or any illness, must avoid going to work, school or public places in order to prevent spreading of the disease causing germs.

viii. Seek medical advice:

As soon as the person experience symptoms of an eye infection, including redness, watering, itching, irritation, discharge or blurred vision, seek medical attention promptly.

6. How can it spread?

Eye infections, commonly referred to as eye flu or conjunctivitis, can spread through various means depending on the specific cause of the infection (viral, bacterial, or allergic conjunctivitis). It may spread through direct contact or indirect contact.

6.1 Direct contact:

Direct contact is the most common way of spread of eye infections through an infected person's eye secretions or respiratory droplets. once infected person touches their eyes or sneezes/coughs without covering their mouth and nose, the virus or bacteria can be present on their hands or in the droplets. If you come into contact with these contaminated fluids and then touch your eyes, you can contract the infection.

6.2 Indirect contact:

Eye infections can also spread indirectly. doorknob, a computer keyboard, or any other surface, the virus or bacteria can survive on that surface for some time. If healthy person touches the contaminated surface and then eyes, he or she may get infected.

6.3 Swimming pools and hot tubs:

Conjunctivitis can also be spread through contaminated water in swimming pools or hot tubs, particularly if the water is not treated properly.

6.4 Airborne transmission:

Some viruses, such as adenoviruses, can spread through the air, especially in crowded or poorly ventilated areas.

7. long-term damage?

Different type of eye infection has different causes depending on type of causative agent the severity of disease depends. Severity of the disease is also dependent on early diagnosis and treatment of the disease. There is risk of viral conjunctivitis complications like corneal involvement or scarring, that could result in impact on vision. On the other hand bacterial conjunctivitis can be treated with antibiotics, however may results in complications like corneal ulcer if not treated which may affect vision also.

Mild viral conjunctivitis, may resolve on their own without the need for specific treatment. In such cases, lubricating eye drops or artificial tears can help to reduce discomfort and soothe the eyes. However, in case of severe infection with potential complications, medical attention should be taken.

Conflict of interest: Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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