

監測及流行病學處



Surveillance  
And  
Epidemiology  
Branch

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14 June 2005

To: Principals / Persons-in-charge,

### Prevention of Acute Conjunctivitis (Red-eye Syndrome)

Acute conjunctivitis (ACJ) is a contagious condition mostly caused by viruses and bacteria. The symptoms are irritation, tearing, pain and redness of the eyes. ACJ occurs all year round and summer is one of peak seasons for ACJ outbreaks in institutional settings. Transmission may occur by contact with discharge from the eye or upper respiratory tract of infected people, from contaminated fingers, clothing and other articles, including sharing of eye makeup applicators, and eye medications. Children under 5 are most often affected. ACJ is usually a self-limiting condition with recovery in one to two weeks time given proper treatment. Patients who develop symptoms of ACJ are advised to seek prompt medical attention and avoid going to swimming pools. Strict personal hygiene is important to prevent ACJ outbreaks.

To prepare for the ACJ season this year, I would recommend you take the following steps:

1. Maintain good communication with parents and help them understand the need to keep children at home when they develop symptoms of ACJ to prevent infecting other children.
2. Maintain personal hygiene practices: avoid sharing towels and toilet articles; minimize hand-to-eye contact; wash hands thoroughly before and after contact with eyes; avoid sharing eye droppers, eye medicines, eye make-up and other items that may come into contact with the eyes. Close supervision of children is necessary.



衛生防護中心乃衛生署  
轄下執行疾病預防  
及控制的專業架構  
The Centre for Health  
Protection is a  
professional arm of the  
Department of Health for  
disease prevention and  
control

3. Advise staff to screen for children with red eyes before they enter the centre/kindergarten. The sick children should preferably be taken home by their parents. However, if circumstances do not allow, they should be placed in areas separated from other children to prevent transmission of ACJ.
4. Follow the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Child Care Centres, Kindergartens, and Schools to keep the environment of the centre/kindergarten clean and hygienic, especially concerning cleansing of toys and toilets and management of excreta and body fluids.

If you notice an increase in the number of children with symptoms of acute conjunctivitis please inform the Central Notification Office of CHP as early as possible at Fax: 2477 2770 or Tel: 2477 2772. CHP will give advice on the management of such cases and take appropriate control measures.

For more information, please visit the website of CHP at ([http://www.chp.gov.hk/content.asp?lang=en&info\\_id=18&id=24&pid=9](http://www.chp.gov.hk/content.asp?lang=en&info_id=18&id=24&pid=9)) and refer to the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Child Care Centres, Kindergartens, and Schools which is available at: (<http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Guild-Booklet-eng.pdf>)

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Thomas Tsang)

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