

Paediatric information: 8-12 year olds

# Vernal and atopic keratoconjunctivitis

The medical terms are:

Vernal keratoconjunctivitis (pronounced ver-nall ker-a-toe con-junk-tiv-eye-tiss and shortened to VKC) and atopic keratoconjunctivitis (pronounced ay-top-ick con-junk-tiv-eye-tiss and shortened to AKC).

It is often called:

Allergic eye disease or eye allergy.

Eye allergy causes sore, itchy and red eyes. It is a bit like eczema of the eye instead of the skin. It might affect you for a while but most young people grow out of it.

## How you see the world

Allergy of the eyes can sometimes cause blurry vision. Your eyes might feel itchy, sore or puffy.

## How the world sees you

People might notice your eyes are red or swollen.

## What causes it?

Allergy diseases happen when the body's defense system is affected by harmless things like dust or pollen. In some people, it affects the breathing (asthma), the skin (eczema) or the eyes. You cannot always tell what is causing your allergy.

## How can the doctor tell?

The doctor can use a microscope to see the eyes close up. They can see that the eyes are red and there might be tiny bumps caused by allergy on the inside of the eyelids or around the dark part of the eye.



Examining the eyes with a microscope

## Getting it sorted

This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print on request. Please call PALS: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325



The doctor will give you eye drops to make your eyes feel better. You might need to keep using the drops even if your eyes seem better, or the allergy could come back. You might need cream for your eyelid skin. Don't rub or scratch your eyes – this will make things worse.

Author: Moorfields paediatric information group  
Revision number: 2  
Approval date: March 2018  
Review date: March 2020

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit [www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs](http://www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs)

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**  
City Road, London EC1V 2PD  
Phone: 020 7253 3411  
[www.moorfields.nhs.uk](http://www.moorfields.nhs.uk)

### **Moorfields Direct telephone helpline**

Phone: 020 7566 2345  
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm  
Saturday, 9am-5pm  
Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

### **Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)**

Phone: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325  
Email: [moorfields.pals@nhs.net](mailto:moorfields.pals@nhs.net)  
Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

### **Your right to treatment within 18 weeks**

