

NATIONAL STANDARD METHOD

CONJUNCTIVITIS

SYNDROME 3

Issued by Standards Unit, Department for Evaluations, Standards and Training
Centre for Infections









UK Clinical Virology Network

CONJUNCTIVITIS

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www.evaluations-standards.org.uk

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STATUS OF NATIONAL STANDARD METHODS

National Standard Methods, which include standard operating procedures (SOPs), algorithms and guidance notes, promote high quality practices and help to assure the comparability of diagnostic information obtained in different laboratories. This in turn facilitates standardisation of surveillance underpinned by research, development and audit and promotes public health and patient confidence in their healthcare services. The methods are well referenced and represent a good minimum standard for clinical and public health microbiology. However, in using National Standard Methods, laboratories should take account of local requirements and may need to undertake additional investigations. The methods also provide a reference point for method development.

National Standard Methods are developed, reviewed and updated through an open and wide consultation process where the views of all participants are considered and the resulting documents reflect the majority agreement of contributors.

Representatives of several professional organisations, including those whose logos appear on the front cover, are members of the working groups which develop National Standard Methods. Inclusion of an organisation's logo on the front cover implies support for the objectives and process of preparing standard methods. The representatives participate in the development of the National Standard Methods but their views are not necessarily those of the entire organisation of which they are a member. The current list of participating organisations can be obtained by emailing standards@hpa.org.uk.

The performance of standard methods depends on the quality of reagents, equipment, commercial and in-house test procedures. Laboratories should ensure that these have been validated and shown to be fit for purpose. Internal and external quality assurance procedures should also be in place.

Whereas every care has been taken in the preparation of this publication, the Health Protection Agency or any supporting organisation cannot be responsible for the accuracy of any statement or representation made or the consequences arising from the use of or alteration to any information contained in it. These procedures are intended solely as a general resource for practising professionals in the field, operating in the UK, and specialist advice should be obtained where necessary. If you make any changes to this publication, it must be made clear where changes have been made to the original document. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) should at all times be acknowledged.

The HPA is an independent organisation dedicated to protecting people's health. It brings together the expertise formerly in a number of official organisations. More information about the HPA can be found at www.hpa.org.uk.

The HPA aims to be a fully Caldicott compliant organisation. It seeks to take every possible precaution to prevent unauthorised disclosure of patient details and to ensure that patient-related records are kept under secure conditions¹.

More details can be found on the website at www.evaluations-standards.org.uk. Contributions to the development of the documents can be made by contacting standards@hpa.org.uk.

The reader is informed that all taxonomy in this document was correct at time of issue.

Please note the references are now formatted using Reference Manager software. If you alter or delete text without Reference Manager installed on your computer, the references will not be updated automatically.

Suggested citation for this document:

Health Protection Agency (2010). *Conjunctivitis* National Standard Method S3 Issue 1. http://www.hpa-standardmethods.org.uk/pdf_sops.asp.

¹ Department of Health NHS Executive: *The Caldicott Committee. Report on the review of patient-identifiable information.* London. December 1997

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AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Controlled document reference	SYNDROME 3
Controlled document title	Conjunctivitis

Each National Standard Method has an individual record of amendments. The current amendments are listed on this page. The amendment history is available from standards@hpa.org.uk.

On issue of revised or new pages each controlled document should be updated by the copyholder in the laboratory.

Amendment Number/ Date	Issue no. Discarded	Insert Issue no.	Page	Section(s) involved	Amendment

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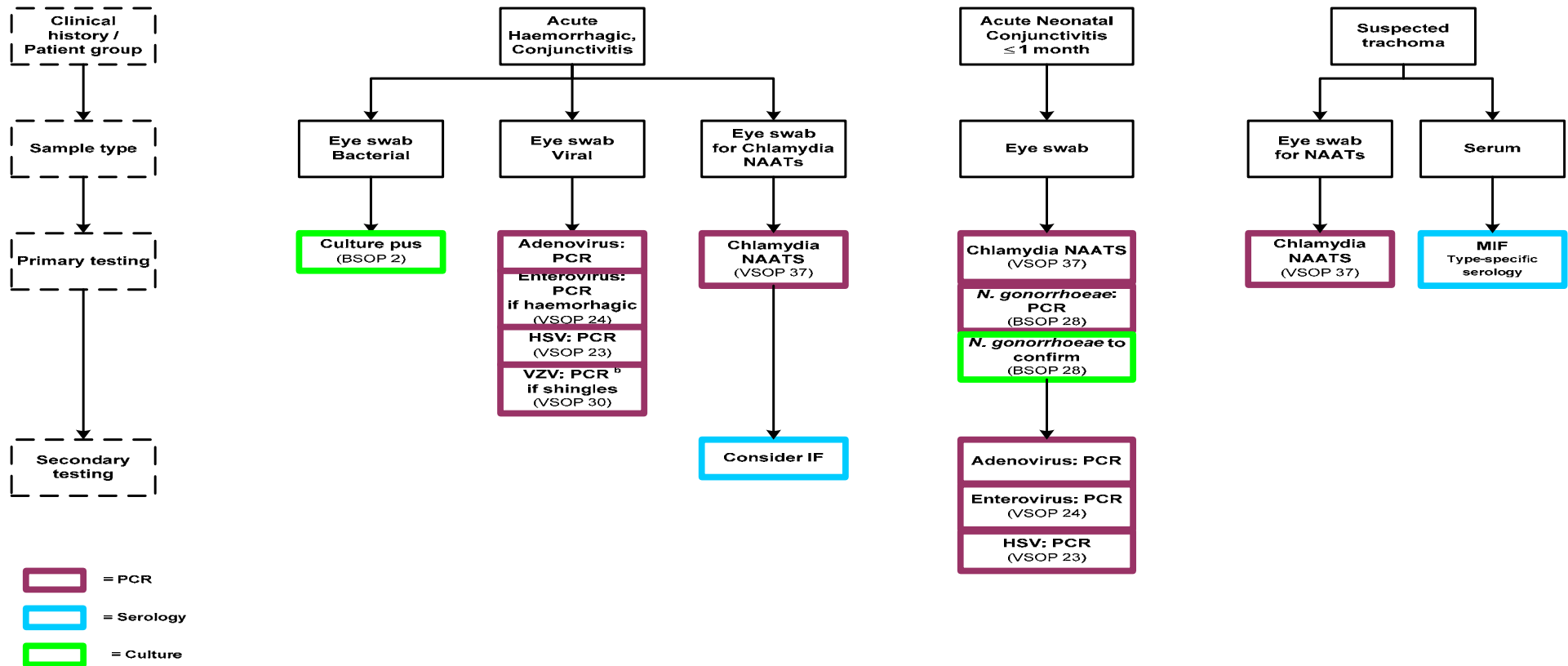
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CONJUNCTIVITIS^a

Conjunctivitis is the inflammation of the conjunctiva. There are two main types of conjunctivitis – allergic and infective. Allergic conjunctivitis occurs when the immune system of the body attacks something that is not an infectious agent, such as pollen or make-up, causing inflammation. Infective conjunctivitis is caused by several different types of viruses, bacteria, or fungi infecting the eye. Symptoms of conjunctivitis include hyperaemic red conjunctiva and a profuse mucopurulent discharge. Conjunctivitis is sometimes called pink eye. Features such as the clinical appearance of the eye, the age of the patient, and the exposure history should be taken into account in assessing the likely cause of this condition.



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- ^a Also refer to [BSOP 2 Investigations of eye swabs and canalicular pus](#), [BSOP 28 – Investigation of genital tract and associated specimens](#), [BSOP 54 Investigation of intraocular fluids and corneal scrapings](#), [VSOP 21 – Isolation of viruses associated with infections of the eye: keratoconjunctivitis](#), [VSOP 37 – Chlamydia Infection – Testing by nucleic acid amplification test \(NAATS\)- Minimum testing Algorithm](#)
- ^b Only carried out if shingles is indicated in the clinical details

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CONTACTS

This National Standard Method was initiated and developed by the National Standard Methods Joint Working Group (http://www.hpa-standardmethods.org.uk/wg_nsmjoint.asp). The contributions of many individuals in clinical virology and bacteriology laboratories and specialist organisations who have provided information and comment during the development of this document, and final editing by the Medical Editors are acknowledged.

The National Standard Methods are issued by Standards Unit, Department for Evaluations, Standards and Training, Centre for Infections, Health Protection Agency, London.

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