

Letter to the Editor

Efficacy of an Ancient Vedic Technique in the Management of Allergic Conjunctivitis

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Dear Editor,

Allergic conjunctivitis (AC) is quite common and affects 10–20% of the population.^[1-5] AC should be diagnosed early and treated appropriately and the best option would be to prevent the disease by removing the culprit (allergen) from the eyes as early as possible. Conventionally, washing the eyes by splashing water is done. However, this is not very effective as the eyes close reflexly in most patients and proper washing of the conjunctival sac doesn't happen. An ancient Indian ayurvedic method of cleaning eyes, dipping eyes in an eye cup which we named dip eyes in water (DEW), was tried on three patients of AC [Figures 1 and 2].

The patient was advised to clean his/her hands with soap and water. The eyes were gently washed with clean water. After this, clean water was poured into an eye cup [Figure 1], and the eye on one side was dipped into the water in the eye cup keeping the face-down [Figure 1]. The eye was kept open and moved circularly, clockwise, and then in an anti-clockwise direction. Then, the water was discarded, the eye cup was washed, and the process was repeated on the other eye. The whole process was repeated 3–4 times a day.

If the eye cup is unavailable, then a handful of water (water collected in a hand curved in a dish-shaped manner) can also be used for the same purpose.

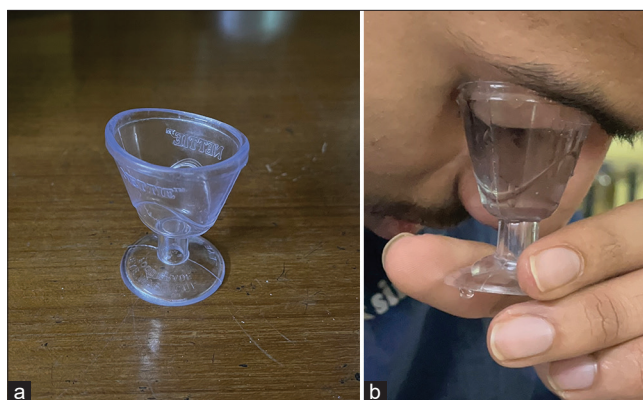


Figure 1: (a) Eye cup. (b) Right eye dipped in an eye cup.

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Figure 2: A 17-year-old male suffering from repeated episodes of allergic conjunctivitis who got significant relief from the dip eyes in water technique.

The DEW technique was utilized in three patients suffering from AC. There were three males, aged 17, 21, and 30 who were suffering from episodic AC symptoms for 14, 4, and 11 months, respectively. The patients were suffering from repeated episodes of redness of the eyes (conjunctival hyperemia), discharge from the eyes, foreign body sensation, itching, and/or photophobia. The patients had tried various conservative measures, topical and systemic anti-histaminics, topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, mast cell stabilizers, and topical corticosteroids. These measures provided partial or temporary relief, but the symptoms kept coming back. They were prescribed the DEW technique along with the medicines that they were using. Once the symptoms were completely resolved, all the medicines were stopped and only the DEW technique was used. The frequency of DEW decreased from 4 times a day during the therapeutic stage to 2 times a day during the preventive stage. All the three patients were doing well and asymptomatic after a follow-up of 7, 9, and 10 months [Figure 2], respectively.

The DEW technique has several advantages. It is simple, harmless, economical (free of cost), and easy to learn and use. Eye cup is easily available on online shopping platforms (INR 75 or USD 1/eye cup).

To conclude, the promising results of DEW in this cohort can help to extend the indications of DEW not only in the management of AC but also other eye disorders such as meibomian gland dysfunction and blepharitis in which eye hygiene plays a therapeutic role and as a daily routine eye-care practice to prevent various eye disorders. Further prospective, randomized, and controlled studies are needed to corroborate the findings of the study that the DEW technique can play therapeutic as well as preventive role in the allergic conjunctivitis.

Declaration of patient consent

Patient's consent not required as patient's identity is not disclosed or compromised.

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Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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