

Conjunctival swab positivity 12.7 percent for SARS-CoV-2 patients

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For hospitalized patients with severe acute respiratory syndrome

coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) positivity, conjunctival swab (CS) positivity is 12.7 percent, and 45.1 percent have at least one conjunctival manifestation, according to a research letter published online April 19 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Emilio Pedrotti, M.D., from the University of Verona in Italy, and colleagues examined the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2-related conjunctival manifestations and CS positivity on [hospital admission](#) (T1) and three days thereafter (T2) among a sample of 142 [patients](#) not receiving anti-inflammatory treatment. All patients received [hyaluronic acid](#) artificial tears (ATs) twice daily in the clinically worse eye: nonpreservative-free (NPF) ATs with povidone iodine were administered at one hospital and preservative-free (PF) ATs were administered at two hospitals. Conjunctival redness (CR) and other conjunctival signs and symptoms (OCSSs) were compared between T1 and T2 and between AT-treated and nontreated eyes.

The researchers found that 12.7 percent of the patients had a positive CS result and 45.1 percent had at least one clinical finding (e.g., CR). Eyes with CS positivity had significantly higher CR grade. At T2, 8.5 percent of patients had a positive CS result. Five additional patients were in the non-AT group and 14 fewer in the AT group. Among nontreated eyes, redness worsened, while among AT-treated eyes, both CR and OCSSs improved. NPF-ATs were 1.13 times more effective than PF-ATs for improving CR and were the only formulation able to reduce OCSSs and CS positivity.

"These results suggest a concordance between CR grade and CS positivity," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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