giant papillary conjunctivitis
a closer look

WHAT IS GIANT PAPILLARY CONJUNCTIVITIS?

Giant papillary conjunctivitis (GPC) is a condition where
the inner surface of the eyelid becomes irritated.

It is most commonly related to wearing contact lenses. GPC occurs both in patients who use soft and rigid
gas-permeable contact lenses, though it occurs much
closest commonly related to wearing contact lenses. It is most commonly related to wearing contact lenses. GPC occurs both in patients who use soft and rigid
gas-permeable contact lenses, though it occurs much
more frequently in soft contact lens wearers. The
condition can appear at any time, even after many
years of wearing contact lenses with no problems.

Rarely, people who are not contact lens wearers can
get GPC, such as people who wear artificial eyes or
who have exposed sutures (stitches) in their eye.

WHAT CAUSES GPC?

GPC is thought to be caused by one or more of the
following:

- Allergic reaction to a contact lens or to the
  chemicals used to clean contact lenses;
- Rubbing of contact lens against the eyelid;
- Deposits on the lenses.

If you wear contact lenses and have asthma, hay fever
or other allergies, you may be more likely to get GPC.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF GPC?

Normally, the underside of your eyelid is very smooth.
In the early stages of GPC, this area of the eyelid
becomes rough, red and swollen. Then bumps (called
papillae) form and can grow larger than 1 millimeter
(about the size of a pinhead) in diameter.

Symptoms include:

- Itching;
- Burning;
- Foreign body sensation;
- Increased mucus drainage;
- Redness;
- Blurred vision (due to mucus sticking to the
  contact lens);
- Swollen or droopy eyelids.
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Some people with GPC also notice that their contact lenses tend to ride up on their eyes when they blink, as though the lenses were sticking to their eyelid.

If it is not taken care of, GPC can damage eye tissue and the cornea (the clear front window of the eye) as the large bumps underneath the eyelid rub against the eye.

HOW IS GPC TREATED?

GPC may be treated by:

- Stopping contact lens wear for several days or weeks to let the irritation heal and disappear;
- Using eyedrop medicine to reduce swelling and itchiness;
- Changing the type of contact lenses you wear;
- Cleaning your contact lenses more frequently with enzymes;
- Not using preserved lens solutions, and switching to unpreserved salt solutions;
- Limiting the amount of time you wear your lenses each day.

GPC can be an ongoing problem. If you notice symptoms of GPC returning, you should see your ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.) immediately. If GPC keeps coming back, your ophthalmologist may suggest that you not wear contact lenses at all.

Your ophthalmologist will work with you to find the best way to treat GPC.

COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR OPHTHALMOLOGIST:

San Antonio Eye Center, P.A.
(210) 226-6169
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Academy reviewed 03/11