

This factsheet has been prepared to help you understand herpesvirus keratitis / conjunctivitis. Whilst it is hoped this factsheet addresses many concerns you may have, please contact us if you have any further questions regarding the condition.

Why has my cat got watery discharge from its eyes?

A very common cause of watery discharge from one or both eyes in cats is infectious conjunctivitis (inflammation of the pink tissue surrounding the eyes and eyelids). Feline Herpesvirus is a common cause of conjunctivitis, frequently associated with secondary Chlamydia, and Mycoplasma infections.



Why does it occur?

Cats are commonly infected at birth or at a very young age. The viral infection spreads to nerve tissue (especially in the ocular surface) and the respiratory tract. Commonly signs of sneezing, coughing and nasal discharge are noted at the same time as discharge from the eyes becomes evident.



Can both eyes be affected?

Yes, usually both eyes are affected. However, one eye may be more severely affected than the other.

Can I develop this infection? Are my kids at risk?

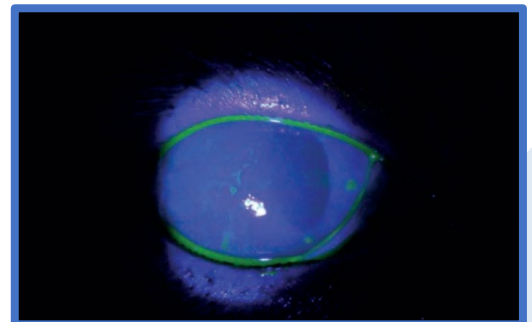
No, Herpesvirus infections are species specific. This means that you can't be infected by your cat and vice versa, i.e. you have chronic cold-sores, your cat will not pick up a herpesvirus infection from you.

What treatment options do I have?

Treatment of herpesvirus infection can be long-lasting and frustrating, as there is no cure for this infection. The virus may persist throughout your pet's life, returning to dormant stages between active flare-ups. However there are several kinds of topical (eye drops) and systemic (tablets) medications (antivirals, antibiotics and anti-inflammatories) available to reduce the severity of the infection and ease the symptoms.

What happens if I do nothing?

If left untreated, chronic herpesvirus keratitis / conjunctivitis may result in chronic deep ulcerations, which may result in loss of vision or the eye itself. The process is usually painful.



Are any breeds predisposed?

There is no clear breed predisposition as any cat can develop this condition, however we tend to see Herpesvirus infections predominantly in younger cats.