

**G. P. C.**  
**Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis**

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**What is G. P. C. ?**

G. P. C. stands for Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis. This is a type of inflammation that can affect contact lens wearers. G.P.C. does not cause any loss of vision, rather it is a frustrating condition that makes wearing contact lenses intolerable.

It is thought that G. P. C. is a type of an allergic reaction, that is triggered by wearing old, heavily coated contact lenses. The inflammation is located on the underneath side of the eyelid, in a tissue called the tarsal conjunctiva. The inflammation is easily diagnosed by the appearance of large swollen processes, which make the tarsal conjunctiva appear to be covered with bumps instead of being smooth. These "bumps" are called papillae, hence the name Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis.

**What are the symptoms of G. P. C. ?**

Normal symptoms of Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis can include: red, itchy, irritated eyes, blurry vision while wearing your contact lenses, increased lens movement with each blink, stringy mucous secretions in your tears, and very uncomfortable contact lenses.

You may develop symptoms of G. P. C. after months, or even years, of wearing contact lenses. Sometimes the symptoms develop slowly, while in other cases, the condition seems to begin suddenly.

Early in the condition, the symptoms may appear to lessen if you vigorously clean your contact lenses, but eventually, even cleaning your lenses will not stop the symptoms of G.P.C. from occurring.



*G.P.C. is located on the underneath side of the eyelid.*

*The following suggestions will help you prevent G.P.C. from starting or reoccurring:*

- Clean your contact lenses properly.*
- Replace your contact lenses as prescribed.*
- Do not overwear your contact lenses.*
- Inspect your contact lenses often. Do not wear your lenses if they show signs of aging, discoloration, or torn edges.*
- Avoid using solutions containing Thimerisol.*
- Do not "mix & match" contact lens solutions. Use only what has been prescribed for you.*
- Consider wearing disposable contact lenses.*

**What causes G. P. C. ?**

No one knows for sure what causes G. P. C.. However, there are several conditions that tend to favor the development of G. P. C.. They are: wearing old contact lenses, not properly cleaning your contact lenses, and overwearing your contact lenses. Also, contact lens solutions that contain a preservative called Thimerisol have been found to trigger G.P.C. in some patients.

Because G.P.C. is a form of an allergic response to contact lens coatings or solutions, sensitivity to developing the condition varies from patient to patient. This makes it difficult to predict who will develop G.P.C..

**What is the treatment of G. P. C. ?**

The first step in the treatment of Giant Papillary Conjunctivitis is to stop wearing your contact lenses. Because G. P. C. is an allergic type reaction, exposure to the old lenses can cause continued episodes of the condition. Therefore, your contact lenses must be discarded, even if your lenses are relatively new.

Many times, you must wait until the inflammation has subsided before you can resume wearing contact lenses. In severe cases, an anti-histamine and/or steroid medication, in the form of eyedrops, may be prescribed.

When your eyes are healthy again, new contact lenses will be prescribed. Most often, either a disposable contact lens, or a deposit resistant contact lens will be dispensed. A different cleaning method may also be recommended.