

MANAGEMENT OF ENTEROVIRAL CONJUNCTIVITIS OUTBREAKS IN THE SINGAPORE MILITARY IN 2005

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Abstract. Between 8 August and 9 October 2005, tropical Singapore experienced a national epidemic of acute viral conjunctivitis. We report the epidemiological and virological findings of outbreaks of viral conjunctivitis in military facilities during the same time period, and the outbreak control measures taken. Outbreaks of viral conjunctivitis were identified by medical officers in military medical facilities. Epidemiological and virological investigations were carried out, and a standard set of control measures was instituted for each outbreak upon detection. Eight outbreaks of viral conjunctivitis occurred in the time period, corresponding to the national outbreak. Delayed detection and institution of preventive measures during the outbreaks were associated with delayed effectiveness of the control measures. Every delay in outbreak detection by one day resulted in a delay in terminating the outbreak by 0.82 days ($p=0.01$). Coxsackievirus A24 was identified from some of the conjunctival swab samples taken.

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