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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
7572	22.07.2023	24.07.2023	Pune Maharashtra	www.timesofindia.com/English https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/conjunctivitis-alarm-in-alandi-2-5k-infected/articleshowprint/102027070.cms
Title:	Conjunctivitis alarm in Alandi, 2.5k infected in Pune, Maharashtra			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU – Pune, SSU- Maharashtra			

Over 2,500 children have been detected with viral conjunctivitis, a contagious eye infection, in the temple town of Alandi and its neighbouring villages this week so far, prompting the health authorities to rush a team of pediatricians and ophthalmologists to the affected areas to contain the spread.

According to the Pune Zilla Parishad, as many as 450 conjunctivitis cases were reported in the areas on Monday, followed by 740 on Tuesday, 210 on Wednesday, 160 on Thursday and another 981 cases on Friday.

"The team of pediatricians and ophthalmologists are checking on all the children, including those enrolled with ashram schools in Alandi. We are also screening children in the nearby bordering villages of Khed to detect conjunctivitis cases and check its spread. More than 150 cases have been found in the 11 primary health care centres of the villages in Khed so far," a district health official said.

Ayush Prasad, chief executive officer, Pune ZP, said, "At least 450 children with conjunctivitis approached the out-patient department (OPD) at the primary health

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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care centres on Monday. Since then, we have been recording cases in Alandi. On Friday, as many as 981 cases were recorded."

He said after the large number of cases in Alandi, the health authorities started screening children in the neighbouring villages in Khed too. "The health authorities screened as many as 14,819 children in these areas. Of these, 153 were found to be infected with conjunctivitis. Most of these cases are from Shel Pimplegaon," Prasad said.

The district health authorities have shot a letter to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) seeking its experts to visit the affected areas to determine the causes and type of the infection.

Dr Sheela Godbole, director in-charge of NIV, confirmed of receiving a letter from the district health authorities. "In the letter, they have asked for a team of NIV experts to visit the affected areas. We will send a team on Saturday," Dr Godbole said.

Dr Abhay Tidke, district immunization officer, Pune ZP, said, "The NIV team will inspect the exact cause of this outbreak. It seems like a viral conjunctivitis outbreak. Most children have redness and itchiness in the eyes. They are also experiencing discharge in one or both eyes. Some kids have reported fever too."

For now, the children are being given eyedrops and other medicines. "It usually takes 4-5 days for the symptoms to completely subside. In addition to Alandi and Khed, we have also started screening children in the villages bordering Pimpri Chinchwad," Dr Tidke said.

The administration has also proposed to shut down schools in the affected villages, if the cases continue to soar.

Pune district civil surgeon Dr NS Yempalle told TOI, "Most of the affected children are from Std V and X, who are residing in ashram schools."

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