



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES  
DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
PO BOX 369  
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0369

JON S. CORZINE  
Governor

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

FRED M. JACOBS, M.D., J.D.  
Commissioner

April 3, 2007

Dear Healthcare Provider:

This notice is to inform you of a possible increase in severe eye infections among New Jersey residents, and to ask for your assistance in identifying cases.

*Acanthamoeba* keratitis (AK) is a parasitic infection of the cornea that can cause severe morbidity and vision loss. In the United States, approximately 85% of AK cases occur among contact lens users. There are approximately 1-2 cases per 1,000,000 contact lens users nationwide. AK cases are typically diagnosed by clinical signs and symptoms as well as diagnostic testing. Diagnostic tests include culture, histopathology, corneal scraping, PCR, and confocal microscopy.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is conducting a multi-state investigation to determine if the incidence of AK is increasing. This investigation aims to describe the outbreak and determine risk factors in order to recommend prevention measures. The investigation formally began in January 2007 and was prompted by a possible increase in AK cases reported by Chicago ophthalmologists since 2005.

In support of the multi-state investigation, the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS) requests your assistance.

Healthcare providers, please:

- Examine records for *Acanthamoeba* keratitis (AK) cases with onset of symptoms on or after January 1, 2005, including any newly diagnosed cases
- Report AK cases among New Jersey residents to the local health department of the patient's residence
  - Please find local health departments by county and municipality at <http://nj.gov/health/lh/directory/lhdselectcounty.htm>
- Report AK cases among non-New Jersey residents directly to NJDHSS  
Please contact either:  
Dr. Adam Langer (609-588-7500, [Adam.Langer@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Adam.Langer@doh.state.nj.us)), or  
Dr. Mary Glenshaw (609-588-3500, [Mary.Glenshaw@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:Mary.Glenshaw@doh.state.nj.us))

Thank you,

Adam J. Langer, DVM, MPH  
Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer

Mary T. Glenshaw, PhD, MPH, OTR/L  
Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer