

Trans health



transmed
MEDICAL FUND

SECOND EDITION OF 2024



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Welcome to the second edition of TransHealth for 2024

Principal Officer's note



Petrus Wassermann
Principal Officer

Welcome to the second edition of TransHealth for 2024.

With winter fast approaching, many of our members may get the flu. The best way to reduce your and your family's risk of flu is to get vaccinated. The Fund covers one flu vaccine per beneficiary per year from insured benefits.

The following tips can help protect you against flu: avoid contact with people who are sick, stay at home if you are sick, cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, wash your hands regularly, manage your stress levels, get enough sleep, eat nutritious food, drink plenty of fluids and clean frequently touched surfaces.

If you have an email address and you have not updated the information, please contact the customer service department on **0800 450 010** or send an email to **membership@transmed.co.za**. Please include your membership number on all correspondence to the Fund.

In this edition we cover hyperhidrosis, which is a condition that results in excessive sweating. Also included is an article on conjunctivitis, which is an irritation or inflammation of the conjunctiva – the thin, clear membrane that protects your eyes.

We hope that you will take the time to read this newsletter.

Congratulations to the winners of last issue's competition. In our latest competition, we ask you to indicate whether certain statements are true or false. All the answers are in this issue, so read it carefully before answering.

We welcome any suggestions that you may have on articles or member benefits you would like to see published in future newsletters. Please send your suggestions to **suggestions@transmed.co.za**.

Happy reading.

Warm regards

Petrus Wassermann
Principal Officer



Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis or pink eye is an irritation or inflammation of the conjunctiva – a thin, clear membrane that covers the white part of the eyeball. It can be caused by allergies or a bacterial or viral infection. Conjunctivitis can be extremely contagious and is spread by contact with eye secretions from someone who is infected.

Main causes of conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis can be caused by a virus, bacteria or by allergies. Bacterial and viral conjunctivitis are easily spread from person to person. Allergic conjunctivitis is not contagious.

Types of conjunctivitis

- **Viral conjunctivitis** is the most common type of conjunctivitis. This type of pink eye is very contagious and often spreads through schools and other crowded places. It usually causes burning, red eyes with a watery discharge. Viral conjunctivitis is usually caused by the same virus that causes runny nose and sore throat in people with the common cold.
- **Bacterial conjunctivitis** is also very contagious. An infection from bacteria causes this form of pink eye. With bacterial conjunctivitis, you have sore, red eyes with a lot of sticky pus in the eye. Some bacterial infections, however, may cause little or no discharge. Sometimes the bacteria that cause pink eye are the same that cause strep throat.
- **Allergic conjunctivitis** is a type of pink eye that comes from an allergic reaction to pollen, animals, cigarette smoke, pool chlorine, car fumes or something else in the environment. It is not contagious. Allergic pink eye makes your eyes very itchy, red and watery and the eyelids may get puffy.

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Bacterial and viral conjunctivitis can be quite contagious. The most common ways to get the contagious form of pink eye include:

- direct contact with an infected person's bodily fluids, usually through hand-to-eye contact
- spread of the infection from bacteria living in the person's own nose and sinuses
- not cleaning contact lenses properly; using ill-fitting contact lenses or decorative contact lenses are risks as well.

Symptoms of conjunctivitis

- The feeling that something is in your eye or a gritty sensation in your eye
- Red eyes
- Burning eyes
- Itchy eyes
- Painful eyes (this is usually with the bacterial form)
- Watery eyes
- Puffy eyelids
- Blurry or hazy vision
- Being extra sensitive to light
- Lots of mucus, pus or thick, yellow discharge from your eye; there can be so much that your eyelashes stick together

Best treatment for conjunctivitis

Treating your pink eye usually depends on the type of conjunctivitis you have:

- There is no specific treatment for conjunctivitis caused by most viruses. Your body fights the virus on its own. Placing a cool, wet washcloth on your eyes can help make them feel more comfortable.
- If your pink eye is caused by a bacterial infection, your ophthalmologist may prescribe antibiotic eye drops, depending on how severe your symptoms are. Antibiotics do not treat an infection caused by a virus or by allergy.
- If your conjunctivitis is due to allergies, you might be told to use certain eye drops to help with the itchiness and puffiness.
- Sometimes conjunctivitis can be caused by a chemical or other substance in your eye. In this case, rinse the eye free of the substance. You might be told to use certain eye drops or ointment for the eyes.

Conjunctivitis usually goes away on its own within one to two weeks. If your symptoms last longer than that, you should see your ophthalmologist. He or she can make sure you don't have a more serious eye problem.

How to stop conjunctivitis from spreading

Viral and bacterial conjunctivitis can spread from person to person. Follow these tips so you will not infect other people or re-infect yourself:

- Use a clean towel or tissue each time you wipe your face and eyes.
- Wash your hands often. Always wash them before and after you eat, when you go to the bathroom or after you sneeze or cough.
- Try not to touch your eyes. If you do, wash your hands right away.
- Bacteria can live in makeup and this can cause pink eye and even a dangerous infection of the cornea. Do not use eye makeup while your eyes are infected. Replace your makeup if you have an eye infection. And never share eye makeup with others.
- Make sure to clean or replace contact lenses exactly as recommended by your ophthalmologist. You should not wear contact lenses until the conjunctivitis goes away.

Source: <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/diseases/pink-eye-conjunctivitis>

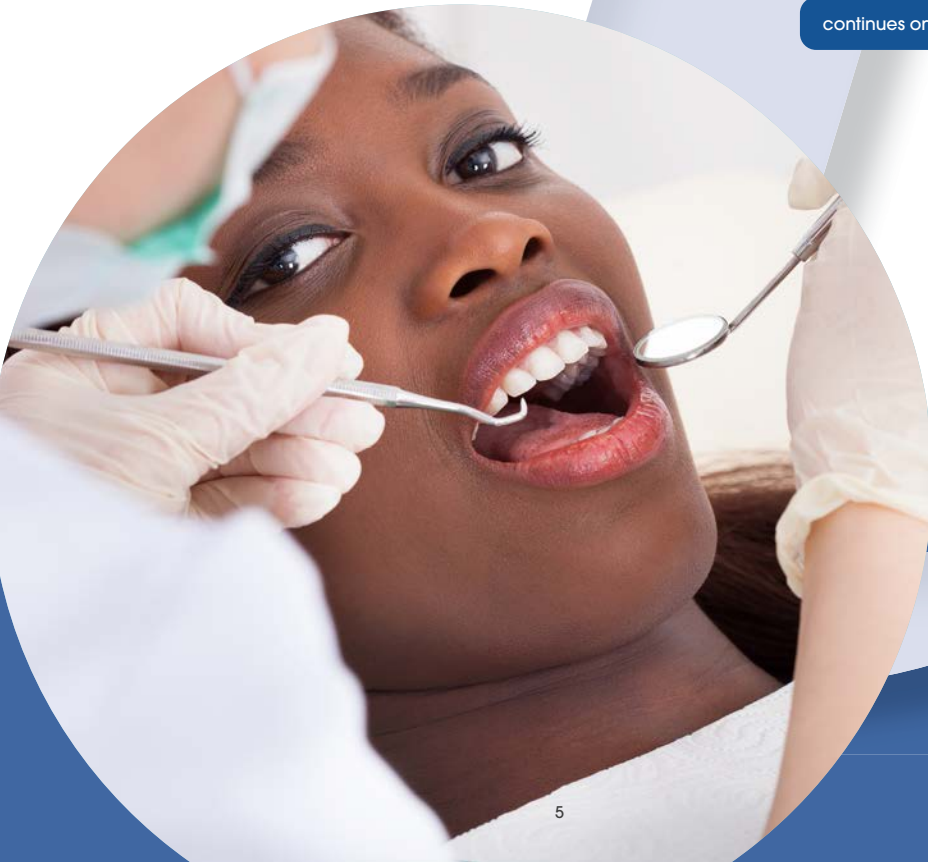
Diabetes can harm your teeth and gums: Tips for good oral health

If your diabetes is not well-controlled, you have a higher chance of getting mouth infections, particularly periodontal (gum) disease. This disease can damage your gums and the bones that hold your teeth in place and it might make it painful to chew. Sometimes, people with serious gum disease even lose their teeth.

Diabetes and some medication used to treat diabetes can cause a dry mouth. Saliva protects the tissues in your mouth as it washes away food particles, prevents bacteria from growing and fights acid formed by the bacteria in your mouth. When your mouth is dry, you have a higher risk of dental cavities and gum disease.

Diabetes can also increase the amount of glucose in your saliva. Bacteria in your mouth uses the glucose and forms a soft, sticky film called plaque. This in turn builds up on your teeth near your gum line and hardens into a deposit called tartar, which can cause gum disease.

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Take time to check your mouth regularly. If you notice any of the following signs of oral health problems, tell your dentist right away:

- dry mouth
- bad breath or taste in your mouth that does not go away when you brush your teeth
- gums bleed when you brush and floss
- sore gums or painful white patches
- loose teeth or gums pulling away from your teeth
- if you wear dentures, a change in the fit of the dentures.

The good news is that you can keep your teeth and gums healthy even if you have diabetes. Here are some important things to do:

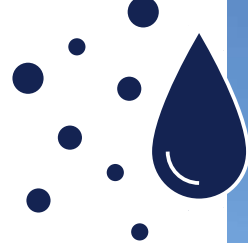
- Keep your blood glucose levels under control.
- Brush your teeth with a small, soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste for two minutes at least twice a day, i.e. every morning and every night.
- Floss every day to clean between your teeth (once daily or at least four times a week).
- Avoid sweets, sugary food and sugar-filled drinks. If you do eat or drink these, limit them to mealtimes. Read nutritional content labels on food packaging. Limit sugar to 25 g (six teaspoons) or less per day.
- Make it a habit to rinse your mouth with water after every meal.
- If you smoke, try to quit. If you are finding it difficult to quit smoking, reduce the number of cigarettes you smoke to start off with. Smoking makes gum disease worse and it makes it more difficult to manage blood sugar levels.
- Visit a dental healthcare professional at least once a year for routine checkups or more often if your dentist says you need it. Be sure to tell the dentist that you have diabetes and give him or her a list of any medication items you take.

Periodontal disease can make it hard to control your blood sugar levels. Taking good care of your teeth and gums, including getting regular dental cleaning and treatment, will help you prevent these oral health problems or stop them from getting worse. Keeping your mouth healthy can have a positive impact on your overall health.

Source: DENIS

denis

Hyperhidrosis



Hyperhidrosis is a condition that results in excessive sweating. Hyperhidrosis happens when your sweat glands stay on even when you don't need sweat to cool you down.

Hyperhidrosis can be classified according to the parts of the body affected, as well as the underlying cause of the sweating. The sweat glands, also known as sudoriferous or sudoriparous glands, are located throughout the human body. The number of sweat glands can vary from one person to the next. The *eccrine* sweat glands are distributed over most of the body and function as the body's primary cooling system, while the *apocrine* sweat glands, located primarily in the armpits and around the anus, serve no regulatory purpose.

Types of hyperhidrosis

There are two main types of hyperhidrosis:

- **Primary hyperhidrosis** (also called focal or essential hyperhidrosis) causes excessive sweating in the hands, underarms, face and feet without any known reason.
- **Secondary hyperhidrosis** (also called generalised hyperhidrosis) causes excessive sweating all over the body or in a larger area of the body and can be caused by excessive heat, as well as a medical condition or medication.

Primary hyperhidrosis is characterised by sweating on specific parts of the body. The sweating is typically bilateral (occurring on both sides of the body) and most commonly affects the apocrine glands of the armpits, followed by the eccrine glands of feet, palms, scalp and groin. Primary hyperhidrosis is so named because the sweating is the condition. While there may be triggers that set off an episode, the triggers are not considered unusual and will not cause symptoms in other people. Primary hyperhidrosis may be further broken down by the part of the body that is affected, such as the following:

- Axillary hyperhidrosis is limited to the armpits.
- Craniofacial hyperhidrosis involves the head and face.
- Palmoplantar hyperhidrosis affects the hands (palmar) and/or feet (plantar).
- Gustatory hyperhidrosis, also known as Frey's syndrome, affects the scalp, face, neck and/or chest immediately after eating certain foods.
- Idiopathic unilateral circumscribed hyperhidrosis is a condition of unknown origin in which heavy sweating is concentrated in one side of the body.

Secondary hyperhidrosis is the second form of hyperhidrosis and is characterised by sweating across the entire body. Secondary hyperhidrosis is so named because the sweating is the secondary consequence of an underlying cause, which is most often a disease, physiological disorder or medication side-effect.

There are several clues that can help differentiate between the two conditions:

Primary hyperhidrosis

- Limited to one or several parts of the body
- Usually manifests with symptoms before the age of 25 and peaks by the age of 35
- Rarely involves night sweats
- Occurs in the absence of any other symptoms

Secondary hyperhidrosis

- More generally widespread across the body
- Risk increases with age
- Often involves night sweats
- Often occurs at the same time as other symptoms

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The combination of medical and family history, duration of symptoms, age of onset and the absence or presence of an apparent cause are usually enough to make the distinction.

Causes of hyperhidrosis

The causes of hyperhidrosis are numerous. In some cases, the cause may never be found, particularly with primary hyperhidrosis. In others, the cause may be obvious and potentially treatable, as can happen with cases of secondary hyperhidrosis.

While the exact cause of primary hyperhidrosis remains something of a mystery, it is thought that certain triggers can overexcite the sympathetic nervous system in some people. The sympathetic nervous system is part of the autonomic nervous system that regulates the body's response to intense stimulus and triggers the so-called 'fight-or-flight' response.

Anxiety, stress and excitement are common triggers for primary hyperhidrosis, although the location and duration of the response can vary. 'Flop sweat' is a common term for the sudden and excessive outbreak of sweat, most often in association with jitters and nerves.

Certain food, drink, caffeine and nicotine can also trigger sweating in a way that is anything but normal. While it is natural, for instance, to sweat when you eat especially hot or spicy food, people with gustatory hyperhidrosis may do so when they eat something cold. In some cases, even smelling or thinking of food can cause a response.

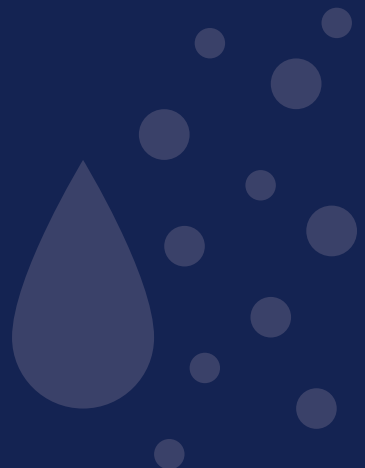
At its very heart, primary hyperhidrosis represents a complex dysfunction of the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system that receives the nerve signals and regulates perspiration. Any problem occurring along this route can potentially trigger the overproduction of sweat.

Secondary hyperhidrosis is sweating caused by a medical condition or is drug-induced. It is a symptom of a primary condition rather than the condition itself. The causes may be related to cancer, hormonal dysfunction, infections, medication, metabolic disorders and systemic medical conditions.

Some of the more common medical conditions associated with secondary hyperhidrosis include:

- acute febrile (fever-causing) infection
- adrenal cancer (cancer of the adrenal glands)
- alcoholism
- cancer of the thoracic (chest) cavity
- congestive heart failure
- diabetes
- encephalitis (inflammation of the brain)
- fibromyalgia (disorder that causes body pain and tenderness)
- gout
- HIV
- hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid gland)
- hyperpituitarism (overactive pituitary gland)
- lymphoma (a type of blood cancer)
- menopause ('hot flashes')
- obesity
- rheumatoid arthritis
- shingles (herpes zoster)
- stroke
- substance abuse
- spinal cord injury
- tuberculosis.

Some medication items can also cause secondary hyperhidrosis.





Dealing with hyperhidrosis

Whether you have primary or secondary hyperhidrosis, there are things you can do to deal with the symptoms.

One of the best ways to avoid a sweating episode is to identify the triggers that sets it off, such as caffeine or nicotine. If you are unsure of the cause, keep a 'sweat diary' to record what you were doing when an episode occurred.

In addition:

- Avoid exposure to hot, humid weather whenever possible.
- When outdoors or working out, keep your body temperature down by drinking cold water.
- Wear loose-fitting cotton socks and clothing, even at the gym.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and spicy food.
- Apply antiperspirant to your feet and hands before bedtime or when preparing for a social situation.
- Avoid shoes without fabric lining or buy absorbent insoles.
- Let your athletic shoes dry out completely before putting them on. You can also drop them in the dryer, if needed.
- Bring an extra-large absorbent towel to workouts.
- Shower daily, but avoid saunas, steam rooms or hot showers that raise body temperature.
- Explore relaxation techniques and mind-body therapy.

Source: <https://www.verywellhealth.com/hyperhidrosis-symptoms-overview-4177694>



Caring for your mental health

Your mental health is an essential part of living and wellbeing.

Mental wellbeing can be described as your mental state: how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life. Our mental wellbeing is dynamic. It can change from moment to moment, month to month or year to year.

How to take care of your mental health

Self-care means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve both your physical and mental health. This can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact.

Here are some self-care tips:

- If possible, get regular exercise.
- Eat healthy, regular meals and stay hydrated.
- Make sleep a priority.
- Try a relaxing activity, such as doing breathing exercises.
- Set goals and priorities.
- Practise gratitude.
- Focus on positivity.
- Stay connected.

Self-care looks different for everyone and it is important to find what you need and enjoy.

IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS



WHO TO CALL TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE FUND

| Services | Link plan | Select and Prime plans |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Customer service department | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 transmed@universal.co.za | 0800 450 010 enquiries@transmed.co.za |
| Membership and contributions | 0800 450 010 | 0800 450 010 |
| Hospital and major medical pre-authorisation | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 | 0800 225 151 |
| Disease programmes | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 | 0800 225 151 |
| Ambulance authorisation | 0800 115 750 | 0800 115 750 |
| HIV/AIDS | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 | 0860 109 793 |
| Dental services | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 | 0860 104 941 (Select plan) 0800 450 010 (Prime plan) |
| Optical services | Universal Healthcare 0861 686 278 | PPN 0861 103 529 (Select plan) 0800 450 010 (Prime plan) |
| Fraud hotline | 0800 000 436 | 0800 000 436 |
| WhatsApp | 0860 005 037 | 0860 005 037 |

IMPORTANT EMAIL ADDRESSES

| Services | Email addresses |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Enquiries | enquiries@transmed.co.za |
| Banking details and membership | membership@transmed.co.za |
| Compliments | compliments@transmed.co.za |
| Complaints | complaints@transmed.co.za |
| Appeals | appeals@transmed.co.za |
| Claims | claims@transmed.co.za |
| Ex gratia | exgratia@transmed.co.za |
| Suggestions | suggestions@transmed.co.za |
| External service provider for the Link plan (Universal Healthcare) | transmed@universal.co.za |

DISCLAIMER:

The information and articles in this newsletter do not constitute medical advice or a medical claim for any product of any nature whatsoever on behalf of the publisher, Fund, Administrator or the distributor. Consult a qualified healthcare practitioner for diagnosis or treatment of any diseases or medical conditions.

It is with great pleasure that we announce the **WINNERS** of the brainteaser competition from the first edition of TransHealth for 2024.

- First prize:** Ms MM Sowden
Second prize: Ms HSPJ Bronkhorst
Third prize: Ms PC Ehlers

SOLUTION FROM THE PREVIOUS COMPETITION
Missing word: **RESPONSIBILITY**

WIN WITH TRANSMED

True or false competition

We are giving away prizes to the winners of our true and false competition. All you need to do is to indicate whether the statements are true or false. You will find the answers in this edition of the newsletter. The first correct entry will win R2 000. The second and third correct entries will each win R1 000. Please note that terms and conditions apply.

You may use the following channels to forward your answers:

- **Post:** True or false competition, PO Box 2269, Bellville 7535
- **Email:** enquiries@transmed.co.za
- **Fax:** 011 381 2041/42

Your entry must reach Transmed Medical Fund by no later than 30 June 2024.

Please indicate whether the following statements are true or false by ticking the relevant box below:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Mental health is an essential part of living and wellbeing. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 2. Call 0800 000 436 for membership and contribution queries. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 3. There are five types of hyperhidrosis. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 4. Diabetes can increase the amount of glucose in your saliva. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 5. Viral and bacterial conjunctivitis can spread from person to person. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| 6. Puffy eyelids are a symptom of pink eyes. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |

Full name:

Physical address:

Postal address:

Email address:

Membership number:

Contact phone number:

Terms and conditions

- The competition is only open to Transmed Medical Fund members and their registered dependants.
- Late entries will not be considered for the draw.
- Please note that entries may be posted, emailed or faxed to Transmed.
- Winners will be notified telephonically and their names will be published in the TransHealth magazine. Transmed may require the publication of the photographs of the winners.
- The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Entry into the competition signifies acceptance of all rules.