

19. Tresch DD, Neahrng JM, Duthie EH, et al: Outcomes of cardiopulmonary resuscitation in nursing homes: can we predict who will benefit? *Am J Med Aug* 1993;95(2):123-130

20. Hallstrom A, Cobb L, Johnson E, et al: Cardiopulmonary resuscitation by chest compression alone or with mouth-to-mouth ventilation. *N Engl J Med* 2000;342(21):1546-1553

21. Skogvoll E, Wik L. Active compression-decompression cardiopulmonary resuscitation: a population-based, prospective randomized clinical trial in out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. *Resuscitation* 1999;42(3):163-172

22. Luiz T, Ellinger K, Denz C: Active compression-decompression cardiopulmonary resuscitation does not improve survival in patients with prehospital cardiac arrest in a physician-manned emergency medical system. *J Cardiothoracic Vasc Anesth* 1996; 10(2):178-186

23. Roberts D, Hirschman D, Scheltema K: Adult and pediatric cpr: attitudes and expectations of health professionals and lay persons. *Am J Emerg Med* 2000;18:465-468

24. Godkin MD, Toth EL: Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Older Adults' Expectations. *Gerontologist* 1994;34(6):797-802

### CORNEAL ABRASION FROM VICK'S VAPOR

*To the Editor:*—The growing popularity of the street drug 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, known as MDMA or “ecstasy,” has been documented in the newspaper and television. This hallucinogenic amphetamine produces a hypersensory state that amplifies the mentholated sensation of Vick's Vapor Rub placed on the body. I can report seeing multiple patients presenting to the emergency department (ED) with corneal abrasions, unilateral and bilateral, after having Vick's Vapor “blown” into their eyes at close range through a nasal inhaler.

An 18-year-old man presented to the ED complaining of pain in both of his eyes after partying the prior night with friends at a club. While under the influence of ecstasy, a friend blew through the fenestrated end of a Vick's Vapor nasal inhaler into the patient's eyes from a distance of inches. The goal was to feel the cool, mentholated sensation in his eyes. He denies any contact to his

eyes by the inhaler casing. He soon felt pain in his eyes and described a clouding of his corneas. In the ED, focal chemical injuries to the corneas were found. His visual acuity was 20/20 bilaterally. His extraocular movements were full. Visual fields were normal as tested. The fluorescein stain demonstrated confluent uptake, consistent with abrasion, on the inferior aspect of both corneas. The patient was seen by an ophthalmologist and discharged on Pred Forte drops and pain medication.

As mentioned above, I have seen multiple cases of corneal injuries after contact with Vick's vapor blown through inhalers. The painful keratitis appears as a corneal defect that is likely due to chemical injury. This is possibly the result of direct irritation from camphor (approximately 4.8% in Vick's Vapor Rub). Also, Vick's contains small amounts of spirit of Turpentine, the vapor of which has been reported as a corneal irritant.

The subject of ecstasy abuse, with all night rave parties, and concurrent use of other drugs is well documented. This “designer drug” is synthesized in the laboratory and gives the user a feeling of enhanced pleasure, especially to sensory stimulation. Adolescents and young adults experimenting with ecstasy heighten their sensory stimulation by listening to “electronica” dance music, watching twirling glow sticks, and feeling the cool, mentholated sensation of Vick's Vapor Rub on their bodies. This sensation is taken one step further by having someone blow the vapor directly onto their eyes via a Vick's nasal inhaler. A review of the literature found no other reports of injury to the cornea sustained in this way.

MICHAEL T. BRAZDA, MD  
Baptist Hospital of Miami  
Miami, FL

### References

1. Grant WM: Toxicology of the Eye, ed 4, 1993. p. 306, 1480, 1497-98
2. Smith MB: Handbook of Ocular Toxicity, 1976, p. 253-54.
3. Microdex, Inc., 1974-1999, Volume 102 Expiration date: 11/30/99
4. Dahl AA, Grant WM: Unusual keratitis from a household remedy. *Am J Ophthal* 1969;685:858-862
5. Jaiwal AK: Vick's Vaporub induced dermo keratoconjunctivitis-A case report. *Ind J Ophthal* 1989;37(3):154