

Chapter 4

Clinical Diagnosis and Treatment - Fungal Keratitis

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Fungal keratitis (FK) is the most frequent fungal infection of the eye.^{1,2} FK is one of the major causes of blindness, especially in Asia. Most of the reports with large series of FK are originated from India, however there are reports from other countries as well.³⁻⁹ There are three major predisposing factors for FK; trauma with organic or vegetable matter, use of contact lenses, pre-existing systemic conditions, and ocular surface problems. Trauma is the key predisposing factor, in healthy young males engaged in agricultural or other outdoor work. There is a history of trauma in more than 5 to 65 % of FK cases and trauma was identified as a principal risk factor in 44 % of children who had microbial keratitis in southern United States.^{6,10,11} Trauma related keratitis is mostly filamentous keratitis. Abrasions caused by contaminated contact lenses (especially hydrophilic contact lenses) may predispose to *Fusarium* keratitis.^{3-5,12-15} Insufficient tear secretion, defective eyelid closure, pre-existing epithelial defect, refractive surgery, herpetic keratitis, allergic conjunctivitis, use of eye drops (especially steroids) and systemic diseases like diabetes mellitus, and immunosuppression may predispose to keratitis mostly associated with *C. albicans* and related fungi.^{3-6,10-16}

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