

ACANTHAMOEBA keratitis

Drug of choice: Topical 0.02% **chlorhexidine** and **polyhexamethylene biguanide** (PHMB, 0.02%), either alone or in combination, have been used successfully in a large number of patients. Treatment with either chlorhexidine or PHMB is often combined with **propamidine isethionate** (*Brolene*) or **hexamidine** (*Desmodine*). None of these drugs is commercially available or approved for use in the US, but they can be obtained from compounding pharmacies. Leiter's Park Avenue Pharmacy, San Jose, CA (800-292-6773; www.leiterrx.com) is a compounding pharmacy that specializes in ophthalmic drugs. **Propamidine** is available over the counter in the UK and Australia. **Hexamidine** is available in France. The combination of **chlorhexidine**, **natamycin** (**pimaricin**) and debridement also has been successful.¹ Debridement is most useful during the stage of corneal epithelial infection. Most cysts are resistant to **neomycin**; its use is no longer recommended. Azole antifungal drugs (**ketconazole**, **itraconazole**) have been used as oral or topical adjuncts.² Use of corticosteroids is controversial.³

1. K Kitagawa et al, Jpn J Ophthalmol 2003; 47:616.
2. FL Shuster and GS Visvesvara, Drug Resist Update 2004; 7:41.
3. K Hammersmith, Curr Opinions Ophthal 2006; 17:327; ST Awwad et al, Eye Contact Lens 2007; 33:1.

Information provided by The Medical Letter. For a copy of the entire **Drugs for Parasitic Infections** article, go to: www.medicalletter.org/parasitic_cdc