

Supplementary information

Supplementary table 1. Studies reporting the patient-perceived benefit of topical sodium cromoglycate versus placebo, included in the meta-analysis.

Reference	Type of trial	Setting	Sample age (years) Mean (range)	Allergen, time of year	Patient inclusion criteria	Patient exclusion criteria	Active treatment	Length of trial	Assessment of subjective symptoms	Number that preferred placebo	Number that preferred active
Greenbaum 1977 ¹¹	RCT	St Joseph's Hospital and McMaster University, Ontario, Canada	29 (14–52)	Ragweed, Aug 1976	Ragweed allergic conjunctivitis, symptomatic for 2 years, with allergic rhinitis, skin prick positive to ragweed pollen	Perennial symptoms or autumn seasonal symptoms excluded	4% SCG	1 month	Interview and patient diary cards	8/14	15/15
Hechanova 1984 ¹²	RCT	Makati Medical Centre, Philippines	35 (5–71)	Not stated	Bilateral chronic allergic conjunctivitis	Other ophthalmic pathology, contact lens wearers, topical or systemic steroids, systemic antihistamines	4% SCG	4 weeks	Clinician interview and patient diary cards	4/19	17/19
Lindsay 1979 ¹⁸	RCT	Bangor Hospital, Northern Ireland, UK	All ages	Grass pollen, Apr–Sep (mostly May–Jul)	On a 'hayfever register', history of eye symptoms and hayfever rhinitis, positive skin test to grass pollens	Other eye diseases, contact lens wearers, topical or systemic steroids	2% SCG, 0.01% benzalkonium chloride, 0.4% phenylethanol	4 weeks	Patient diary cards	12/33	18/20
Nizami 1981 ¹⁹	Cross-over RCT	Private patients, Toronto, Canada	28	Ragweed, Aug 1980	Eye symptoms and allergic rhinitis for 2 years, skin prick positive to ragweed pollen	Those with perennial symptoms or on other influential medications excluded	2% SCG	1 week	Personal interview	2/26	22/26
Ruggieri 1987 ¹⁵	RCT	Istituto di Oftalmologia, University of Rome, Italy	19 (6–40)	Feb 1983– Apr 1984	Active bilateral VKC or conjunctivitis owing to a seasonal allergen	Other eye disease, purulent conjunctivitis, contact lens wearers, systemic corticosteroids or antihistamines	4% SCG ointment	4 weeks	Clinician interview and patient diary cards	1/14	13/15
van Bijsterveld 1984 ¹⁷	Cross-over RCT	Department of Ophthalmology, Utrecht State University, The Netherlands	38.6 (9–73)	Not stated	Diagnosis of chronic conjunctivitis not owing to infection or trauma	Not stated	Topical SCG	4 weeks	Patient symptoms recorded at each exam	15/58	23/57

RCT = randomised controlled trial; SCG = sodium cromoglycate, VKC = vernal keratoconjunctivitis.