ARE WE AWARE OF THE RISK OF EYE IRRITATION CAUSED BY SOME EYEDROPS, PARADOXICALLY, IN THE TREATMENT OF ALLERGIC CONJUNCTIVITIS ?

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OBJECTIVES
The formulation of eye drops needs to prevent any microbial contamination of the eye. For this purpose, pharmaceutical manufacturer can use: the addition of a preservative, the use of a specific packaging including a sterilising filter or a single dose packaging.

The purpose of the study is to check if the contents of eye drops indicated for the treatment of allergic conjunctivitis can be irritating for the eye.

METHODS
For this purpose, based on Vidal® 2013, we searched for eye drops used in allergic conjunctivitis and we analysed their excipient formulas searching for those known irritating to the eye.

RESULTS
The 21 analysed formulas revealed that the benzalkonium chloride is the only preservative used in this context. Although it is classified as an excitant known to be irritating to the eye, it is still used in 11 cases and cited as an excitant with known effect in only 1 case, while for the rest it is cited as an antimicrobial preservative. The single-dose packaging is used in 7 cases while the packaging including a sterilising filter is used in only 3 cases.

CONCLUSIONS
It seems wise to choose a drug that does not contain benzalkonium chloride when it comes to treat an allergic conjunctivitis. However, if this is not possible, the ophthalmologist must be aware of this risk when it comes to the clinical evaluation of the patient.