



Pink Eye or Conjunctivitis

Parent Resource Template

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DEFINITION

- Conjunctivitis, or pink eye, is an inflammation of the delicate membrane (conjunctiva) that lines the inside of the eyelid and the surface of the eye. Pink eye may be caused by bacteria, viruses, allergies, pollution, or other irritants. Conjunctivitis often occurs with colds, sore throats, or upper respiratory infections.

SYMPTOMS

- Red (or pink), itchy, painful, watery eyes and possibly red or swollen eyelids.
- More than a tiny amount of green or yellow discharge.
- Infected eyes may be crusty and matted shut after sleep from the discharge.
- Tearing, itching, and/or a scratchy feeling in the eye.
- Both eyes are usually affected when the cause is allergies.
- It may be difficult to differentiate between viral and bacterial conjunctivitis.

PREVENTION

- Frequent and thorough handwashing.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wash your hands before and after touching your eyes.
- Do not share eye makeup, contact lens supplies, towels, or washcloths with an infected person.
- Discard eye makeup and disposable contact lenses when an infection occurs.

- Sanitize objects that are commonly touched by hands or face.

TREATMENT

- If thick yellow/green discharge is present and/or eyes are crusted with drainage, prescription antibiotic eye drops may assist in treating infection. Contact your healthcare provider.
- Frequent and thorough handwashing. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Allergy medication may be helpful for symptoms of seasonal allergies.
- Application of cool compresses to the eyes may provide symptom relief of allergy symptoms.
- Do not wear contact lenses or eye makeup in the affected eye until the redness is gone.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- The outer layer of the eye (cornea) may become scratched if the student vigorously rubs the eye.

RETURN TO SCHOOL

- Student may stay in school if: infection is not bacterial, they are mature enough to keep their hands away from eyes, and they are able to use good handwashing techniques.
- If an antibiotic has been prescribed, student may return to school 24 hours after medication has been started.

CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

- For diagnosis and possible treatment.

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Information compiled from the American Academy of Pediatrics

TEMPLATE