

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE) FACT SHEET

What is Pink Eye?

Conjunctivitis, or pink eye, is an infection caused by viruses and bacteria or a condition caused by allergens that produces a red or pink discoloration of the whites of the eye. Symptoms vary based on cause but will include discoloration of the eye.

What are the symptoms?

- Pink or red color of the whites of the eyes, swelling of conjunctiva or eyelid
- Increased tear production
- Urge to rub eyes, itching or burning sensation
- Discharge, crusting of eyelids or lashes especially in the morning.

VIRAL (VERY CONTAGIOUS)

- May also have cold-like symptoms, discharge more watery

BACTERIAL (VERY CONTAGIOUS)

- Discharge more pus-like, sometimes occurs with ear infection

ALLERGIC (NOT CONTAGIOUS)

- Itching, tearing, swelling in eyes. May have other allergic symptoms. (Asthma, itchy nose, scratchy throat)

How can it be prevented?

- General cleanliness is the best way to avoid pink eye
- Do not share pillows, washcloths, towels, eye drops, eye makeup, face makeup, makeup brushes, contact lenses or containers, or eyeglasses

More Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/conjunctivitis>

How can it be spread?

- Spread through direct contact with discharge.
- Using an infected person's eye makeup, clothing, towels and washcloths
- Avoid as much contact with the infected individual and do not go to school, work or daycare until seen by a physician

How it is treated?

- See healthcare provider for treatment recommendations
- With bacterial pink eye, take all medications as prescribed even if starting to feel better
- Do not scratch or rub eyes. This will only make it worse. Instead use a tissue or warm washcloth
- Wash any discharge with clean hands several times a day using a clean wet washcloth or fresh cotton ball. Dispose of cotton ball and wash used cloth in hot water with detergent
- Wash any clothes or linens your hands or infected eyes could have come in contact with, with hot water and soap

