

Treatment

The treatment for conjunctivitis depends on the cause. It is not always necessary to see a healthcare provider for conjunctivitis. But, as noted below, there are times when it is important to seek medical care.

Viral Conjunctivitis

Most cases of viral conjunctivitis are mild. The infection will usually clear up in 7–14 days without treatment and without any long-term effects. In some cases, viral conjunctivitis can take 2-3 weeks or more to clear up, especially if complications arise.

Artificial tears and cold packs may be used to relieve the dryness and inflammation (swelling) caused by conjunctivitis.

Antibiotics will not improve viral conjunctivitis—these drugs are not effective against viruses.



An infected eye

Should you have the mentioned symptoms, please visit your nearest health facility and get checked.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH & MEDICAL SERVICES

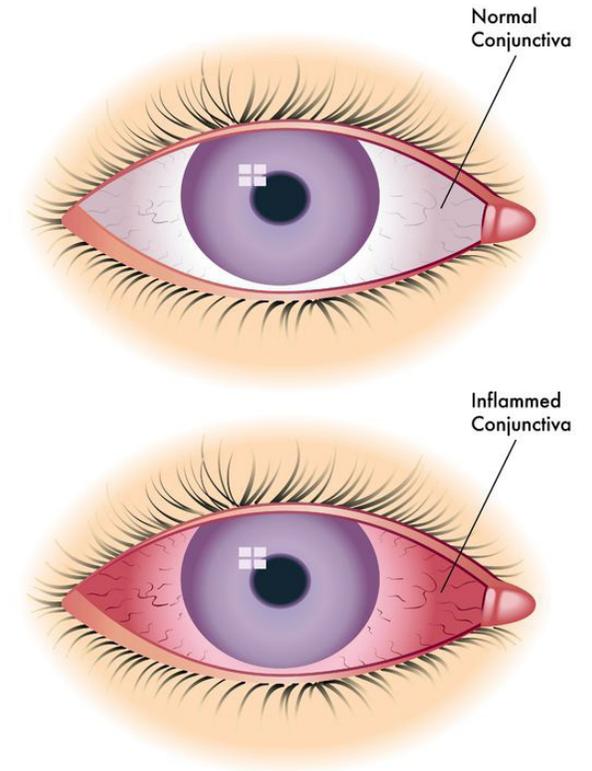
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For more information please visit:
<http://www.cdc.gov/conjunctivitis/index.html>

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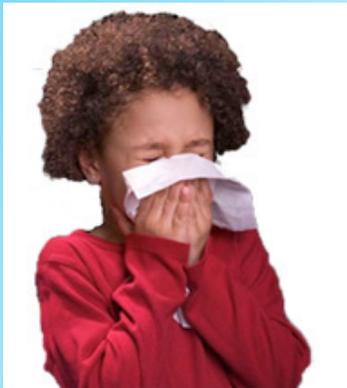


WHAT IT IS?

Conjunctivitis is a common eye condition worldwide. It causes inflammation (swelling) of the conjunctiva—the thin layer that lines the inside of the eyelid and covers the white part of the eye. Conjunctivitis is often called “pink eye” or “red eye” because it can cause the white of the eye to take on a pink or red color.

What Causes it?

Conjunctivitis is caused by infection of the eye with a virus, bacteria, or allergies.



If caused by virus or bacteria

- the virus is similar to that which causes the common cold
- it usually begins in one eye and may progress to the second eye within days.
- it spreads easily and rapidly between people and can result in epidemics.

If caused by allergies

- it is not contagious

Symptoms of conjunctivitis

- Pink or red color in the white of the eye(s)
- Swelling of the conjunctiva • Increased tearing
- Itching, irritation, and/or burning
- Discharge of pus, especially yellow-green (more common in bacterial conjunctivitis)
- Crusting of eyelids or lashes sometimes occurs, especially in the morning
- Sensitivity to bright light sometimes occurs
- Symptoms of a cold, flu, or other respiratory infection may also be present
- Symptoms of allergy, such as an itchy nose, sneezing, a scratchy throat, or asthma may be present in cases of allergic conjunctivitis

Sometimes there are situations that can help your healthcare provider determine what is causing the conjunctivitis. If someone develops conjunctivitis during an outbreak of viral conjunctivitis, this would be a sign that he or she might have viral conjunctivitis.

When to Seek Medical Care

A healthcare provider should be seen if Conjunctivitis is:

- accompanied by moderate to severe pain in the eye(s).
- accompanied by blurred vision, sensitivity to light
- there is an increase in redness in the eye(s).
- discharge of pus
- moderate to severe swelling of conjunctiva
- bleeding

Prevention

You can greatly reduce the risk of getting conjunctivitis or of passing it on to someone else by following some simple good hygiene steps.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes.
- Wash any discharge from around the eyes several times a day. Hands should be washed first--use a clean washcloth or tissue to cleanse the eye area--wash your hands when done.
- Wash hands after applying eye drops or ointment.
- Do not use the same eye drop dispenser/bottle for infected and non-infected eyes.
- Clean eyeglasses
- Wash pillowcases, sheets, washcloths, and towels in hot water and detergent;
- Avoid sharing articles like towels, blankets, and pillowcases.
- Do not share eye makeup, face make-up, make-up brushes, contact lenses, or glasses.
- Do not use swimming pools.

