

Parent Information
School Age Children

Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)



Conjunctivitis is sometimes called pink eye. Often, it is an infection of the eye that can spread easily to others. Allergies, bacteria or viruses can cause conjunctivitis.

Your child might have some or all of these problems in one or both eyes:

- Red, irritated eye(s)
- Burning, scratchy or itchy eye(s)
- Watery eye(s)
- Thick, yellow mucous-like discharge that dries in crusts around the eyes
- Swollen eyelids.

What to do for your child:

Have your child seen by his or her health care provider. Your child might need medicine that is put in the eye or taken by mouth.

If viruses cause the conjunctivitis, your child's body must fight off the infection on its own. Antibiotics do not kill viruses. Your child's health care provider might suggest eye drops that will help the eye feel better, but they won't kill the viruses.

Keep the eye clean by washing it often:

Use a clean face cloth and cool water every time. Wash the eye from the inside to the outside corner. You might want to try a no-tears baby shampoo to help clean the eyes.

Conjunctivitis spreads very easily! Here is what you can do so it is less likely to spread to other people:

Wash your hands well

- Before putting medicine in the eye
- After putting medicine in the eye
- Every time the eyes or face are touched.

Have your child wash his or her hands often – especially if the eyes are touched.

Wash anything touched by infected eyes such as clothes, towels, face cloths, and pillowcases.

Don't share towels, face cloths, or pillowcases.

Don't share make-up. Make-up that is old or shared can have germs in it that can cause conjunctivitis. Throw away any make-up your child might have used.

Don't touch or rub the infected eye.

Check with your child's health care provider if your child complains of:

- Problems seeing
- Severe eye pain
- Light hurting eyes
- The eye is not getting better after two to three days of using medicine.
- Drainage from the eye continues after using all the medicine.

Ask your child's health care provider when your child can return to school or child care.

Information from DHEC's Child Care and School Exclusion Lists: Exclude children with pink eye if they also have fever, severe eye pain or are too sick to participate in activities with other children and staff. For additional information about exclusion when a child has conjunctivitis, see the DHEC Child Care and School Exclusion Lists of Contagious or Communicable Diseases at www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/exclusion.htm.



South Carolina Department of Health
and Environmental Control

www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/exclusion.htm

Child's Name _____

School Nurse _____

Date _____

School _____

School Phone Number (_____) _____