

What is It?

Conjunctivitis, or pinkeye, is an inflammation of the delicate membrane (conjunctiva) that lines the inside of the eyelid and the surface of the eye. Bacteria and viruses, (which can be very contagious), allergies, pollution, or other irritants can cause pinkeye.

What are the symptoms?

- Redness in the whites of the eyes
- Swollen eyelids
- Tearing, feeling of sand in the eyes
- Discharge that causes eyes to stick together during sleep

PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS

After Hours and Weekends call:

Ask - A - Nurse

Free health care information &
physician referral
24 hours a day
Call 594-2000

Ask for Ask – A - Nurse

Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)



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Home Treatment

Although most cases of pinkeye will clear up on its own in 5 to 7 days, viral pinkeye can last many weeks. Pinkeye caused by allergies or pollution will last as long as you are exposed to the irritating substance.

To relieve symptoms

- Apply cold or warm compresses several times a day to relieve discomfort.
- Gently wipe the edge of the eyelid with moist cotton or a clean, wet washcloth to remove encrusted matter.
- ***Don't wear contact lenses or eye makeup until the infection or inflammation is gone.*** Discard eye makeup after an eye infection.
- Discard contacts (disposable)
- Use eye drops as prescribed.

Prevention

Do not share towels, handkerchiefs, or washcloths with a person who has pinkeye.

Wash your hands before putting in contacts.

Insert your contacts before applying eye makeup. Do not apply makeup to the inner rim of the eyelid. Replace eye makeup every 3 to 6 months.



When to Call the Doctor

If the following symptoms develop:

- If there is pain in the eye (rather than irritation), blurring, or loss of vision that is not cleared even momentarily by blinking.
- If your eye is painfully sensitive to light.
- If it feels like there is a foreign object in the eye.
- If the eye is red and there is a greenish yellow discharge that does not begin to go away in 24 hours.
- If there is an abnormal difference between the sizes of the pupils.
- If symptoms of an eye infection last longer than 7 days.