

CONJUNCTIVITIS

Conjunctivitis is inflammation or irritation of the conjunctiva, which covers the white part of the eyeball. It can be spread easily from person to person, especially if it is caused by a virus or bacteria. It is also known as pink eye.

Symptoms

- Viral infection: redness, itching and tearing of the eyes
- Bacterial infection: thick, yellow discharge or crusting, more present in the morning
- Swollen eyelids
- Sensitivity to sunlight

Causes

- Viruses (the same virus that causes the common cold)
- Bacteria
- Pool chlorine, shampoo
- Allergic reaction to pollen, dust

Treatment

- Wash hands with soap and water each time you touch your face.
- Keep your eyes clean by washing them with a clean cotton ball.
- Wash or change your pillowcase daily.
- Do not touch or rub the infected eye.
- Do not wear an eyepatch on the infected eye as it can worsen the condition.
- Do not wear contact lenses until the infection has cleared.
- Do not share facecloths or towels.
- Artificial eyedrops can be applied a few times during the day.

When to see your doctor

- When the infected eye is painful
- If you are unable to see
- If there is no improvement after two days

Conjunctivitis self-assessment tool

Identify symptoms by circling yes/no in table below:

Redness in one or both eyes	Yes	No
Itchiness in one or both eyes	Yes	No
A gritty feeling in one or both eyes	Yes	No
A discharge/crust on waking up in the morning	Yes	No
Tearing of eyes	Yes	No
Pain in one or both eyes	Yes	No

Sensitivity to light	Yes	No
Infection present for more than two days	Yes	No

If you answered yes to two or more of above symptoms, consult a doctor or health care practitioner.

Information compiled by Student Health Services.

Frequently asked questions: <https://www.medanta.org/patient-education-blog/10-frequently-asked-questions-fqs-about-conjunctivitis/>