

## Pink Eye

"Pink eye", or conjunctivitis, is defined as an inflammation of the conjunctiva, which is the thin membrane that lines the inside surface of the eyelids and the sclera (the white part) of the eye. The most common symptoms are red eye and discharge. There are 4 main types of conjunctivitis: bacterial, viral, allergic, and non-specific. Most cases of conjunctivitis are viral in adults and children.

### Viral Conjunctivitis:

Symptoms frequently get worse for the first 3-5 days with gradual improvement over the next 1-2 weeks. Some people may have morning crusting that continues for up to 2 weeks after symptoms first start, but redness, irritation, and tearing should be improved.

Treatment: Focus of treatment is to reduce symptoms; it will not shorten the course of the infection. Options include:

- Artificial tears or lubricant drops
- Topical antihistamine/decongestant eye drops
- Warm or cool compresses

### Basic Eye Care and Conjunctivitis Prevention:

- Simple hygiene measures are the key to minimize spread of conjunctivitis to others.
- Avoid rubbing or touching the eyes.
- Avoid close contact with unaffected people.
- Do not share tissues, towels, cosmetics, bed sheets, etc. with unaffected people.
- Do not use contact lenses while symptoms are present.
- Do not use eye makeup during symptoms. Throw out eye cosmetics, especially mascara.
- Wash hands frequently or use alcohol based hand sanitizers.

### Contact Lens Wearers:

- Should always be evaluated by a healthcare provider to be sure that another, more serious, condition is not present before starting any treatment.

- If your symptoms have worsened or are unchanged after 2-3 days, please see an ophthalmologist or return for further evaluation.
- Avoid wearing contact lenses while having any symptoms.
- When symptoms have resolved, start a new pair of contact lenses and use a new contact case.

