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| <p>SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONJUNCTIVITIS</p> <p><i>- A QUICK CHECK:</i></p> | <p>CAUSED BY: VIRUSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal eye lid swelling <input type="checkbox"/> Gritty sensation <input type="checkbox"/> Treat with warm compresses 4 times a day, 10 minutes each eye. | <p>CAUSED BY: ALLERGIES OR ENVIRONMENTAL IRRITANTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate to severe eye lid swelling <input type="checkbox"/> Mild to intense itching <input type="checkbox"/> Treat with cool compresses 4 times a day, 10 minutes each eye. | <p>CAUSED BY: BACTERIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pus-like discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate eye lid swelling <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal itching <input type="checkbox"/> Treat with warm compresses 4 times a day, 10 minutes each eye <input type="checkbox"/> Contact health care provider during operating hours. |
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Conjunctivitis

“Pink Eye”



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Adapted from UHS
 University of Rochester

PINK EYE (Conjunctivitis)

WHAT IS CONJUNCTIVITIS?

Conjunctivitis is the most common cause of red or "pink" eye. It is the term used to describe the inflammation of the conjunctiva, which is the thin, filmy membrane that covers the white of the eye (sclera). When the conjunctiva becomes irritated or inflamed, the blood vessels that supply it enlarge and become much more prominent. As a result, the eye turns red.

CAUSES OF CONJUNCTIVITIS

Many different sources of eye irritation can cause conjunctivitis. The most common are viruses, allergies and environmental irritants, and bacterial infections. The conjunctiva responds to all of these stimuli in one way -- *it turns red.*

Viruses are the most common cause of conjunctivitis. Some viruses produce the familiar red eye, sore throat, and runny nose of a common cold. Others may affect only one eye. Viral conjunctivitis usually produces a watery discharge, with minimal lid swelling and a gritty feeling.

Allergies and environmental irritants tend to cause a type of conjunctivitis that produces a clear discharge. Some kinds of allergies, like hay fever, make the eyes very itchy, while others merely produce a chronic redness. Environmental irritants, such as smoke or fumes, can also cause conjunctivitis.

Bacterial infections, such as staphylococcus or streptococcus, cause a red eye, which produces considerable amounts of pus. If the amount of discharge from the eye is great, an acute infection is likely and prompt consultation with a health care provider is advisable. Some bacterial infections are more chronic and may produce little or no discharge except for some mild crusting on the eyelashes in the morning. You may notice a moderate amount of lid swelling, but no itching.

Infectious conjunctivitis, whether viral or bacterial, can be quite contagious, so contact with the affected persons' tears must be avoided! Good hand washing helps to prevent the spread! Do not share washcloths or towels.

TREATMENT

- **If caused by an allergy or irritant** (with itching present): Use cool compresses 4 times a day for 10 minutes for each eye.

- **If caused by viruses or bacteria** (with no itching present): Use warm compresses 4 times a day for 10 minutes for each eye.

Compresses can be made using a clean washcloth soaked in cool or warm tap water.

CAUTIONS

- **Seek medical care** if no improvement in 24-48 hours, or if you have impaired vision, severe sensitivity to light, eye pain, or fever.
- **If you wear contact lenses**, they must be removed until all symptoms have resolved. Before reusing your contacts, check with your eye care provider about cleaning or replacing the contacts.