

# Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) is a common childhood eye condition caused by viruses, bacteria or allergy. Children may complain of burning, itching, or general discomfort, and may rub their eyes. Infants may be fussy. Parents may see redness or drainage before the child complains. If your child requires treatment, the doctor may prescribe drops or ointment. Both treatments are effective.

Remember:

- **Clean away** crusts with warm water before applying medication.
- Conjunctivitis may be quite **contagious**. Be careful to wash your hands before and after placing medication in your child's eyes.
- Place prescribed medication in **both** eyes, even though only one may be affected.
- **Don't** use prescription eye drops in your child's eyes without talking with the doctor. The wrong type of drops can cause severe eye damage.
- When someone in the household has conjunctivitis, washcloths, towels, and eye make-up should not be shared with family members or friends.
- Discard eye make-up that may be contaminated.
- Eye make-up and contact lenses should not be worn by anyone who has conjunctivitis, until the infection has cleared.

Contact the doctor if:

- Your child has persistent elevated temperature of over 100°F (37.8°C) oral, or 101°F (38.3°C) rectal; for infants under 3 months, temperature of over 100.4°F (38°C) rectal.
- Your child has increased swelling or redness around eye.
- Your child has severe pain.
- Your child has symptoms lasting longer than 5 to 7 days.
- Your child has difficulty seeing.

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The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care. If your child has persistent health problems or if you have further questions, please consult your health care provider.

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SCPMG Regional Health Education and Health Promotion  
MH-0139-EI (5/98)