CONJUNCTIVITIS

“PINK EYE”

“Not all cases of pink eye need prescription medications. The symptoms can often be relieved with cool compresses and artificial tear solutions.”

constitutional
CONJUNCTIVITIS

Conjunctivitis is one of the most common and treatable eye infections in children and adults. Often called "pink eye," it is an inflammation of the conjunctiva, the tissue that lines the inside of the eyelid. This tissue helps keep the eyelid and eyeball moist.

While pinkeye can sometimes be alarming because it may make the eyes extremely red and can spread rapidly, it’s a fairly common condition and usually causes no long-term eye or vision damage. Some kinds of pinkeye go away on their own, but others require treatment.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:
- Redness of the eye and eyelids.
- Swelling and itching of the eye.
- A yellow or green colored discharge of the eye(s) which is worst in the morning.
- Crusting of the eyelids in the mornings.
- Greater amount of tears.
- Light sensitivity.

CAUSES
- Allergens (substances that cause allergies)
- Bacteria
- Irritating substances (shampoos, dirt, smoke, and especially pool chlorine)
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Viruses
- May also be triggered by Improper care and cleaning of contact lenses.

Allergic conjunctivitis affects both eyes and is a response to an allergy-causing substance such as pollen. In response to allergens, your body produces an antibody called immunoglobulin E (IgE). This antibody triggers special cells called mast cells in the mucous lining of your eyes and airways to release inflammatory substances, including histamines. Your body's release of histamine can produce a number of allergy symptoms, including red or pink eyes.

You may experience intense itching, tearing and inflammation of the eyes — as well as itching, sneezing and watery nasal discharge. Other symptoms may be swelling of the membrane (conjunctiva) that lines your eyelids and part of your eyeballs, resulting in what may look like clear blisters on the whites of your eyes.

Bacterial Conjunctivitis is an infection most often caused by staphylococcal or streptococcal bacteria from your own skin or respiratory system. Infection can also occur by transmittal from insects, physical contact with other people, poor hygiene (touching the eye with unclean hands), or by use of contaminated eye makeup and facial lotions.

Viral Conjunctivitis is most commonly caused by contagious viruses associated with the common cold. The primary means of contracting this is through exposure to coughing or sneezing by persons with upper respiratory tract infections. It can also occur as the virus spreads along the body’s own mucous membranes connecting lungs, throat, nose, tear ducts, and conjunctiva. **There are no available drops or ointments to eradicate the virus for this type of conjunctivitis.** Antibiotics will not cure a viral infection. Like a common cold, the virus just has to run its course, which may take up to two or three weeks in some cases. The symptoms can often be relieved with cool compresses and artificial tear solutions.

TREATMENT

- Apply warm moist compresses for 5 minutes, 3 - 4 times a day.
- Cleanse the lid margins and lashes of discharge.
- Cool compresses applied to the eyes often help relieve the itching and discomfort.
- Lubricating eye drops (artificial tears) may help your eyes feel better.*
- Antihistamine pills may help relieve your symptoms.*
- If drops or ointment have been prescribed, use them until 24 hours after the symptoms subside.
- Do not wear contacts for 48 hours after the symptoms subside.

* You can buy lubricating eye drops and many antihistamine pills without a prescription.

RETURN TO SEE THE DOCTOR IF:
- Increased redness, pain, or swelling of the eye(s) develops.
- Fever rises to 101°F. (38.3 C.) or higher.
- Your vision becomes worse.
- Symptoms not improved after 48 hours.