

# Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis is the inflammation of the conjunctival membrane (the delicate skin which covers the white of the eye underneath the eyelids).

What to look for

- A gritty feeling in the eye, just under the eyelids
- Burning itchy eyes that discharge a heavy, sticky pus
- Tears, a swollen lymph node
- Redness, intense itching
- Eyelids may stick together upon waking in the morning as mucus has dried on the eyelashes and lids overnight.

It is possible to have some of these symptoms in differing combinations depending on the type of cause of the conjunctivitis.

The conjunctiva, the delicate skin just underneath your eyelids, becomes inflamed for various reasons. This condition usually clears itself up after a few days. Conjunctivitis can be highly contagious but it is not serious if detected early.

Bacterial conjunctivitis (pinkeye), usually infects both eyes and produces a heavy discharge of mucus.

Allergic conjunctivitis produces tears, itching, and redness in the eyes, and sometimes an itchy, runny nose.

Occasionally babies develop conjunctivitis in one eye. **See your doctor immediately.**

## Causes

The most common cause of conjunctivitis is by a bacterial or viral infection or by an allergic reaction. If you do not eat well and are under stress, this condition can also be brought on. Children sometimes contract conjunctivitis after a [cold](#) or [sore throat](#).

Conjunctivitis may occur if the baby's tear ducts are not completely formed or if the infant is exposed to bacteria while being born.

## Traditional Treatment

Remedies prepared at home are usually sufficient to keep the eyes clean and prevent the condition from spreading.

If your conjunctivitis is from infection, the doctor will probably prescribe a course of antibiotics in the form of eye-drops or ointment.

Allergic conjunctivitis is not treated with antibiotics but with drops containing anti-allergy drugs.

## **Alternative/Natural Treatments**

These types of remedies sooth the irritations and itching associated with conjunctivitis.

**Herbal Therapies** – Using an eyecup, wash the eye several times a day with a recommended solution. In each case, cool and strain the eyewash before using. Using an eyecup, wash the eye several times a day with a recommended solution. In each case, cool and strain the eyewash before using.

[Echinacea](#) is useful as a blood purifying and immune system strengthening supplement.

**Homeopathy** – Depending on your symptoms you could be recommended to...

- [Apis](#) for stinging eyes and red, puffy eyelids,
- Argentum nitricum for bloodshot eyes and a gritty feeling, for bloodshot eyes and a gritty feeling,
- [Pulsatilla](#) for itchy eyes with a sticky, yellow discharge, for itchy eyes with a sticky, yellow discharge,

**Personal Care** – Always wash the affected areas and be careful that you keep your towels and washers separate from others to avoid spreading the condition. To relieve bacterial or viral conjunctivitis, apply a warm compress for 5 to 10 minutes, three to four times a day. Always wash the affected areas and be careful that you keep your towels and washers separate from others to avoid spreading the condition. To relieve bacterial or viral conjunctivitis, apply a warm compress for 5 to 10 minutes, three to four times a day.

For allergic conjunctivitis, use a cool compress. If the condition does not improve in five days, **call your doctor**.

## **Dietary Considerations**

Try taking Echinacea tablets for this condition

## **Prevention**

Bacterial and viral conjunctivitis are highly contagious. Unless you take preventive measures, the condition may spread to your other eye or to other people.

- Wash your hands often and well.
- Keep your hands away from the infected eye.
- Do not share washers, towels, pillowcases, or handkerchiefs with other family members and change your items after each use.
- Do not use other people's eye cosmetics.

If your child gets pinkeye, keep him or her out of school for a few days.

## **When to seek further professional advice**

- You physically injure your eye.
- Your eyes become red when you wear contact lenses.

- The redness in your eye is affecting your vision
- Your conjunctivitis frequently recurs or appears to be getting worse after a week of home treatment.
- Your newborn baby's eyes are inflamed and are not producing tears.