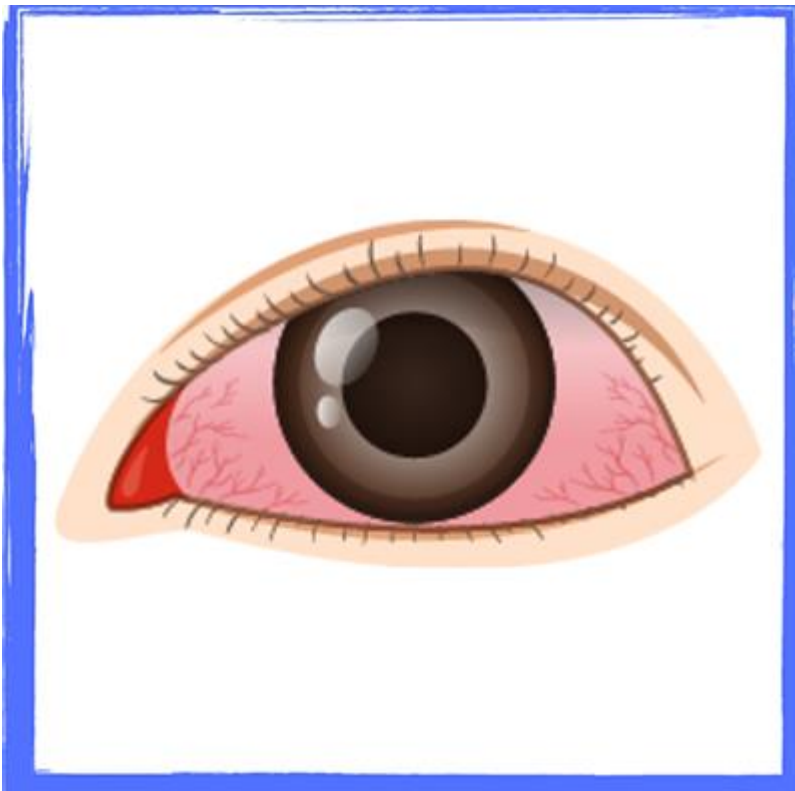


# Conjunctivitis

## Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis, more commonly known as “sticky eye” or “pink eye”, is characterized by inflammation or swelling of the conjunctiva. It can affect one or both eyes. The conjunctiva is a layer of thin, clear membrane that covers the white of the eye and the inside of the eyelids. If you have conjunctivitis, one or both of your eyes may appear red and swollen. It may also produce a watery or purulent (pus containing) discharge.



Some forms of conjunctivitis are highly contagious. Everyone is susceptible to infection, but children below the age of five are most commonly affected. The symptoms may resolve on their own within 1-2 weeks. If your symptoms persist longer than that, you should have your eyes checked by an ophthalmologist

### **What are the symptoms of conjunctivitis?**

Patients with sticky eye may experience the following:

- Eye redness
- Crusting of the eyes
- A gritty sensation in the eye
- Blurred vision
- Itchy or painful eyes
- Watery or sticky and yellowish eye discharge

- Increased sensitivity to light
- Swollen or puffy eyelids

## What causes conjunctivitis?

There are different types of conjunctivitis based on what causes it. The most common causes of sticky eye are germs such as bacteria and viruses. It may also be due to an allergen or irritants. Other causes include contact lens wear and foreign bodies such as dust, debris, or a loose eyelash.

### Infectious Conjunctivitis

- **Viral conjunctivitis** – this type is very contagious and can be caused by different viruses including adenovirus and herpesvirus. The usual signs and symptoms are burning sensation in one or both eyes, redness of the conjunctiva, and a watery discharge.
- **Bacterial conjunctivitis** – both viral and bacterial conjunctivitis can be easily spread from person to person. It is also hard to differentiate the two. Certain bacteria that are normally found on your skin or respiratory system, such as *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*, often cause this type of conjunctivitis.
- **Allergic Conjunctivitis** – Allergic conjunctivitis occurs when your body's immune system reacts with allergens such as pollen, dust mites, moulds, pet dander, cosmetics, or medications. This type is not contagious and is frequently seen amongst patients with seasonal or perennial allergies.
- **Nonspecific Conjunctivitis** – This usually occurs when your eyes are exposed to foreign bodies or irritants. It could be a piece of dust, sand, and grit, as well as smoke, fumes, liquid, toxic substances, and other chemicals.

### How do you get rid of conjunctivitis?

The symptoms of conjunctivitis usually last from 2 days to 3 weeks. If treated promptly, it rarely leads to complications. You need to consult a medical professional to assess the type of conjunctivitis you have. Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic eye drop or ointment to treat the infection and prevent the spread of the disease. There are no specific treatment for viral, allergic, and nonspecific conjunctivitis. Topical antibiotics are often prescribed for bacterial conjunctivitis to shorten the course of the disease. You may apply cold compress, artificial tears, or topical antihistamines to manage the symptoms.

### Can you go to school with conjunctivitis?

If you have bacterial or viral conjunctivitis, you remain infectious while there is eye discharge. Some schools may require children with infective conjunctivitis to receive at least 24 hours of topical treatment before returning to school. If your doctor prescribe antibiotics, you need to complete the entire course of medication to prevent recurrence.

### Medications Available

#### Erythromycin ointment

- Are you allergic to erythromycin?
- Are you allergic to macrolide antibiotics?

### **Chloramphenicol drops**

- Are you allergic to chloramphenicol?
- Are you pregnant or planning to get pregnant?
- Are you breastfeeding?

### **Trimethoprim polymyxin B drops**

- Are you allergic to trimethoprim sulphate?
- Are you allergic to polymyxin B sulphate?
- Are you allergic to benzalkonium chloride?

### **Bacitracin ointment**

- Are you allergic to bacitracin?
- Are you allergic to neomycin?

### **Ofloxacin drops**

- Are you allergic to ofloxacin?
- Are you allergic to ciprofloxacin?
- Are you allergic to benzalkonium chloride?
- Are you allergic to fluoroquinolone antibiotics?
- Are you taking anticoagulants (blood thinners) such as warfarin, theophylline, and cyclosporine?
- Are you pregnant or planning to get pregnant?
- Are you breastfeeding?

### **Ciprofloxacin drops**

- Are you allergic to ciprofloxacin?
- Are you allergic to ofloxacin?
- Are you allergic to benzalkonium chloride?
- Are you allergic to fluoroquinolone antibiotics?
- Are you taking anticoagulants (blood thinners) such as warfarin, theophylline, and cyclosporine?
- Are you pregnant or planning to get pregnant?
- Are you breastfeeding?

### **Bacitracin-polymyxin B ointment**

- Are you allergic to bacitracin?
- Are you allergic to neomycin?
- Are you allergic to polymyxin B sulphate?

### **Azithromycin drops**

- Are you allergic to azithromycin?
- Are you allergic to erythromycin?
- Are you allergic to macrolide antibiotics?
- Are you pregnant or planning to get pregnant?
- Are you breastfeeding?