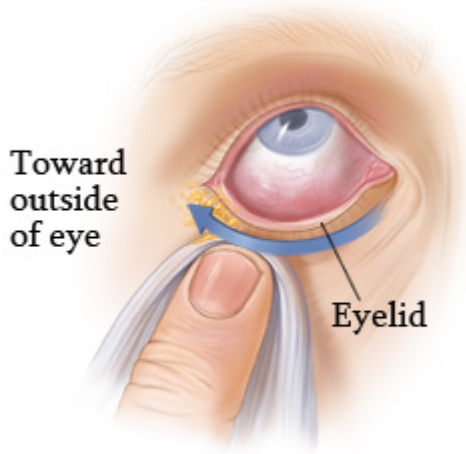


Pinkeye: Care Instructions



Overview

Pinkeye is redness and swelling of the eye surface and the conjunctiva (the lining of the eyelid and the covering of the white part of the eye). Pinkeye is also called conjunctivitis. Pinkeye is often caused by infection with bacteria or a virus. Dry air, allergies, smoke, and chemicals are other common causes.

Pinkeye often gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. Antibiotics only help if the pinkeye is caused by bacteria. Pinkeye caused by infection spreads easily. If an allergy or chemical is causing pinkeye, it will not go away unless you can avoid whatever is causing it.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Wash your hands often. Always wash them before and after you treat pinkeye or touch your eyes or face.
- Use moist cotton or a clean, wet cloth to remove crust. Wipe from the inside corner of the eye to the outside. Use a clean part of the cloth for each wipe.
- Put cold or warm wet cloths on your eye a few times a day if the eye hurts.
- Do not wear contact lenses or eye makeup until the pinkeye is gone. Throw away any eye makeup you were using when you got pinkeye. Clean your contacts and storage case. If you wear disposable contacts, use a new pair when your eye has cleared and it is safe to wear contacts again.
- If the doctor gave you antibiotic ointment or eyedrops, use them as directed. Use the medicine for as long as instructed, even if your eye starts looking better soon. Keep the bottle tip clean, and do not let it touch the eye area.
- To put in eyedrops or ointment:

- Tilt your head back, and pull your lower eyelid down with one finger.
 - Drop or squirt the medicine inside the lower lid.
 - Close your eye for 30 to 60 seconds to let the drops or ointment move around.
 - Do not touch the ointment or dropper tip to your eyelashes or any other surface.
- Do not share towels, pillows, or washcloths while you have pinkeye.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have pain in your eye, not just irritation on the surface.
- You have a change in vision or loss of vision.
- You have an increase in discharge from the eye.
- Your eye has not started to improve or begins to get worse within 48 hours after you start using antibiotics.
- Pinkeye lasts longer than 7 days.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **Y392** in the search box to learn more about "**Pinkeye: Care Instructions**".

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