

Winter Action Patient Information Leaflet

CONJUNCTIVITIS



Conjunctivitis is redness and soreness of the clear covering which coats the front of the eye and eyelids. Conjunctivitis may be caused by infections or allergies.

Infective conjunctivitis is very common and usually due to a bacteria or virus. The symptoms often include sore, red, watery eyes with a sticky discharge that is worse when you wake up. Mostly both eyes are affected, but one may start before the other.

Most infections are not serious and clear in a few days and may be relieved by one of the following:

- Bathing the eyes regularly with boiled and cooled water will soothe the eye and remove the sticky discharge.
- Drops or solutions may be bought at the chemists that will help soothe the eye.

Also remember to wash your hands after touching your eyes and use your own towels, as it is easy to spread the germs to other people.

Allergic Conjunctivitis is caused when the eye comes into contact with something that causes an allergic reaction. This may be seen with people with hayfever or who are allergic to animal fur.

Symptoms include Itchy, watery eyes which are red and sore. Both eyes are usually affected. The eyes can be relieved with eye drops and allergy tablets that are available from pharmacies. Finding and avoiding the cause of the allergy is also advisable.

It is necessary to contact the doctor or pharmacist for advice if:

- **The redness does not go in a few days,**
- **The eye becomes painful or your sight is affected**
- **A young child has symptoms of conjunctivitis**

For all types of conjunctivitis and when using eye drops or ointments contact lenses should not be worn