



The Clinic ▾

Patient Help ▾

Policies ▾

EMR Consulting ▾

OMA and SGFP ▾



Pink Eye

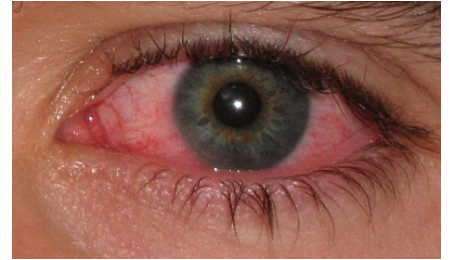
[Home](#) / [Patient Help](#) / [Patient Education](#) / [Pink Eye](#)

WHAT IS PINK EYE?

"Pink eye" is the everyday term people use to describe an infection or irritation of the eye. The medical term for pinkeye is "conjunctivitis."

If you have pinkeye, your eye (or eyes) might:

- Turn red or pink
- Weep or ooze a gooey liquid
- Feel itchy, irritated, or mild burning
- Get stuck shut



WHAT CAUSES PINK EYE?

Pinkeye can be caused by an infection, allergies, or an unknown irritation. The most common form of pink eye is caused by a *VIRAL* infection and is commonly associated with common cold symptoms.

CAN YOU CATCH PINK EYE FROM SOMEONE ELSE?

Yes. When pinkeye is caused by an infection, it can spread easily. Usually, people catch it from touching something that has touched an infected person's eye.

If you know someone with pinkeye, avoid touching his or her pillowcases, towels, or other personal items.

WHEN SHOULD YOU SEE A DOCTOR?

Most of the time, the pink eye that people get that is associated with common cold symptoms does NOT need to be seen by a doctor. In fact, you should probably stay home to avoid spreading the germs.

Reasons to see a doctor:

- if you have pink eye that is *not* associated with cold symptoms.
- if your eye is "painful" or "hurts", as opposed to simply feeling irritated.
- if your eye is sensitive to light.
- if you notice changes in your vision (besides just mild blurriness from the extra tearing or mucous).
- if your eye is more *red* than pink and/or has A LOT of mucous or pus (*as in the second picture here*).
- if you have been wearing contact lenses along with having pink eye.
- if things are not improving after a week.
- if you have any other concerns that something may be more seriously wrong.



CAN PINK EYE BE TREATED?

When pink eye is caused by infection, it is usually caused by a *VIRUS*, so antibiotics or drops will *NOT* help. (Antibiotics do not kill viruses; they only kill bacteria, which is a different type of germ). Pink eye caused by a virus will usually go away on its own in a few days, but may last even a week or more.

You may consider using over-the-counter natural tear drops. These drops will not cure the pinkeye, but they can help with itchiness and irritation.

When using eye drops for infection, do not touch your good eye after touching your affected eye, and do not touch the bottle or dropper directly in one eye and then use it in the other. Both of these things can cause the infection to spread from one eye to the other.

WHAT IF I WEAR CONTACT LENSES?

If you wear contact lenses and you have symptoms of pinkeye, it may be important to have a doctor look at your eyes. In people who wear contacts, the symptoms of pinkeye can be caused by serious problems.

While you have pink eye, you should stop wearing your contacts for a short time. Plus, you might need to throw away your contact lens case and carefully clean your contacts. If your contacts are disposable, you will want to throw them away and start fresh.

CAN PINK EYE BE PREVENTED?

To keep from getting or spreading pinkeye, wash your hands often with soap and water. If washing is not possible, alcohol-based hand gels work, too. *AVOID TOUCHING OR RUBBING YOUR EYES*. Also, avoid sharing towels, bed clothes, or other personal items with a person who has pinkeye.

Terms of Use

