



## Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) in Children



### Overview

This is a swelling or inflammation of the conjunctiva. That's the thin membrane that lines the eye. Conjunctivitis is common in children of all ages.

### Causes

What causes conjunctivitis? Often, it results from an infection. A bacteria or a virus can cause it. When it's caused by an infection, we call it "pink eye." Sometimes a child who has an ear infection or a common cold may also get pink eye. Conjunctivitis may also be linked to allergies. And, it can be linked to irritants like smoke or chemical fumes.

### Symptoms

What are the symptoms? The eye may be red, itchy, painful and watery. It may feel gritty, and it may be sensitive to light. Vision can be blurry. And, a yellowish crust may form around the eye while your child is sleeping.

### Treatment

Treatment depends on the cause. Your child may benefit from medicated eyedrops, artificial tears or soothing compresses. Make sure they avoid things that can irritate the eyes. Because pink eye caused by an infection is very contagious, make sure they wash their hands before and after touching their eyes. Keep surfaces in your home clean, and wash clothing and bedding often. For more information, talk to your doctor.