



## Birmingham Eye Emergency Department

### Patient Information Leaflet

### CONJUNCTIVITIS

#### **What is Conjunctivitis?**

Conjunctivitis, also known as pink eye, is an inflammation or infection of the conjunctiva, the transparent membrane that lines your eyelid and covers the white part of your eyeball. This condition can cause redness, itching, and a feeling of grittiness in the eye.

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

Common symptoms include:

- Redness in one or both eyes
- Itchiness in one or both eyes
- A gritty feeling in one or both eyes
- A discharge in one or both eyes that forms a crust during the night
- Tearing



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### What causes Conjunctivitis?

Conjunctivitis can be caused by viruses, bacteria, allergens (like pollen or dust mites), or irritants such as chlorine, shampoos, and dirt. It can be contagious, depending on the cause.

### How is Conjunctivitis diagnosed?

Your ophthalmologist will examine your eyes and may take a sample of eye discharge to determine the cause of the inflammation.

### What is the treatment for Conjunctivitis?

Treatment depends on the cause of your conjunctivitis:

**Bacterial conjunctivitis** usually requires antibiotic eye drops or ointment.

**Viral conjunctivitis** often resolves on its own, but in severe cases, antiviral medication may be needed.

**Allergic conjunctivitis** may improve when you avoid the allergens causing the reaction. Antihistamines or anti-inflammatory drops can also help.

**Irritant conjunctivitis** will clear up as soon as the irritant is removed.

To avoid spreading conjunctivitis, wash your hands often, avoid touching your eyes, and do not share towels, pillows, or eye makeup.