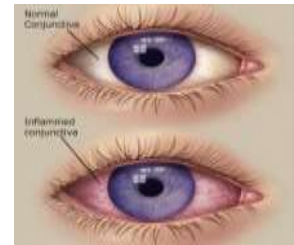


Infectious Conjunctivitis (Pink-Eye) Policy

Conjunctivitis is an irritation of the eyes. It can be caused by **infection** from a **virus** (like a cold) or **bacteria**. It can also be caused by allergies or chemicals (like chlorine in a swimming pool). **Pink eye caused by bacteria is very contagious.** It spreads from person to person by touching the discharge from the eyes.

Signs and Symptoms

- All types of pink eye can **cause redness, itching or pain.**
- Pink eye is actually a misleading name as the eye may **not** be red
- Pink eye caused by **bacteria** usually has drainage, (also called *discharge*). The drainage may be thick, yellow or green, or watery. The eyelids usually swell and may be a little pink. The eyelashes may be stuck together when the child wakes up in the morning.
- Children with bacteria-caused pink eye **sometimes develop an ear infection.** Contact your doctor if you see any of the following: irritability, poor sleep, loss of appetite, or tugging or hitting at the ears.
- **Pink eye does not cause fever.** High fever (over 101) may signal a more serious condition, such as *cellulitis*, a bacterial infection around the eye. The signs of cellulitis are swelling, warmth, tenderness, and a red or purple color around the eye. Cellulitis requires prompt medical attention.



Prevention and Treatment

- **Bacterial** types of pink eye are treated with antibiotics. The antibiotics may be taken by mouth or by drops put into the eye. Children with pink eye are contagious until 24 to 48 hours after starting the antibiotic.
- **Viral** pink eye much less contagious and has no treatment. The child is contagious until the drainage is gone (if there is any).
- **Chemical** or **Allergic** pink eye is not treated with antibiotics because it is not an infection. It is not contagious.
- Frequent hand washing is important to prevent the spread of the viral or bacterial infection to others.

School Policy

- Because *bacteria caused pink eye* is so contagious, children **cannot** attend school as long as **colored or sticky drainage is present.**
- A student may return to school:
 - 24 to 48 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun, and
 - When colored or sticky drainage is gone OR
 - After symptoms have gone in non-treated cases.



If your child has any drainage from her/his eye, keep your child at home and contact your doctor.

Questions? Call the school nurse at 273-1147