Ophthalmology Department

About Conjunctivitis

What is Conjunctivitis?

Conjunctivitis is inflammation of the conjunctiva - the thin membrane covering inside of the eyelids and the sclera (the 'white' of the eyeball). It is most commonly caused by a viral infection and it can affect both eyes.

Is Conjunctivitis common?

Yes, especially in children.

What happens in Conjunctivitis?

The eyes become red and irritated. Discharge can be watery, or pus-like. In the morning, eyelids (and eyelashes) can be very sticky and glued together.

Are there different types of Conjunctivitis?

Viral Conjunctivitis usually follows a cold or a sore throat, and is the most common cause of conjunctivitis.

Bacterial Conjunctivitis is uncommon.

Allergic Conjunctivitis occurs in young children who suffer from asthma or eczema. However, it can also occur in adults after exposure to a substance the body is allergic to. The symptoms are more severe than normal itchy eyes.

How can I avoid getting Conjunctivitis?

Conjunctivitis is very infectious so don't share face cloths, towels or handkerchiefs.

If you have Conjunctivitis in one eye, make sure that you avoid touching the affected eye. If you do touch the eye, wash your hands with soap and water to reduce the chance of passing the infection to the other eye or to another person.

compassionate care

Is there any treatment for Conjunctivitis?

There is no known drug to cure **Viral Conjunctivitis**. You need to wait for the infection to go away by itself (just like with a cold).

Bacterial Conjunctivitis should settle with antibiotic eyedrops or ointment (some of which can be purchased over the counter from a pharmacy).

Allergic Conjunctivitis treatment involves managing the allergic reaction, and trying to identify and stop exposure to the cause.

Always complete the course of medication even if your eye feels better. The symptoms usually settle after a few weeks, but they can occasionally drag on for several months.

Dont forget

Always wash your hands thoroughly.
Never share face cloths, towels or handkerchiefs

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Ophthalmology Department

Telephone: 01484 355085

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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