

Natural Help 4...

Conjunctivitis



What is Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)?

Conjunctivitis, more commonly known as **pink eye**, is an **inflammation of the conjunctiva**, the clear membrane that covers the outermost layer of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids.

As with many of the more common eye inflammations, **conjunctivitis** usually looks and feels worse than it is, and while the pronounced redness can be quite alarming at first glance, **conjunctivitis** very rarely causes long-term visual damage.

It is, however, a condition that often needs to be diagnosed and treated early, as certain **types of conjunctivitis** are very contagious, and any prolonged inflammation of the eyes should be treated with caution to prevent complications and tissue damage.

Diagnosing Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Conjunctivitis is diagnosed with an eye examination using a slit lamp (a microscope with a light attached that has been specifically designed for eye examinations). Your doctor or optometrist will examine your eye and ask you about all your symptoms in order to rule out other **inflammatory eye conditions and diseases** that can mimic **symptoms of pink eye**.

In some cases, a sample of the eye discharge may be taken to determine the type of bacteria or virus causing the infection.

What are the Symptoms of Conjunctivitis?

Pink eye is caused by infections (from bacteria or viruses), allergies, or certain irritants that come into contact with the eye, thus the different **types of conjunctivitis** tend to cause different symptoms. **Symptoms of pink eye** may include:

- Discomfort in the eye
- Redness of the eye or inner eyelids
- Discharge and teariness
- Discharge may cause eyelids to crust and stick together while sleeping
- Itchiness
- Tenderness of the eye, or pain (which can be severe in the cases of irritant conjunctivitis)
- Sensitivity to light
- Swelling of the eyelids



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It is not intended to diagnose or treat any medical condition. Nothing in this eBook is intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this eBook or on ANY website.

- Infection usually begins with one eye, but can quickly spread to other eye in cases of viral or bacterial [conjunctivitis](#)

In most cases of [pink eye](#), pain, photophobia and blurred vision are not very common. Should they occur, it is important to seek medical attention to rule out other diseases such as glaucoma, uveitis, keratitis or meningitis.

What Causes Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)?

[Conjunctivitis](#) is most commonly caused by allergies, but can also be caused by certain viruses, bacteria and eye irritants.

Common Causes of Conjunctivitis

Allergic [Conjunctivitis](#)

Commonly occurring in people who suffer from an allergic condition, **allergic conjunctivitis** can be caused by a number of substances particular to the individual. This type of [conjunctivitis](#) often has a seasonal element and occurs more frequently during spring and seasonal changes.

Other common allergens are dust, pollen, cosmetics, perfume, or medication. Allergic **symptoms of pink eye** often affects both eyes, and **severe itchiness and swelling** are common.

Viral [Conjunctivitis](#)

As the name suggests, **viral conjunctivitis** is caused by a virus, either contracted through the air or direct contact. Viruses that cause the common cold, acute respiratory infections, or disease such as measles or herpes are often the causes of viral conjunctivitis.

For this reason, it is fairly common to notice other symptoms such as upper respiratory symptoms with this type of conjunctivitis, and it is fairly contagious.

Bacterial [Conjunctivitis](#)


Bacteria such as Staphylococcus, Streptococcus, and Haemophilus are the common culprits that cause this type of [conjunctivitis](#) which is highly contagious and easily spread, especially amongst children.

Irritant and Chemical [Conjunctivitis](#)

Certain irritants to the eye such as flame burns, some plant saps, irritant gases or chemicals, and environmental toxins can all cause irritant [conjunctivitis](#).


Help for Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

The **treatment of conjunctivitis** depends on the **symptoms of pink eye** and what caused the condition. While some cases of [conjunctivitis](#) disappear without treatment, or are adequately healed with home-care methods, others tend to be more severe and may require more specific diagnosis and treatment. In all cases, soothing techniques such as a warm compress applied to the eye will help to reduce discomfort.



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Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

Various Treatments for Conjunctivitis

Medical Treatment

[Conjunctivitis](#) caused by **viral and bacterial infections** is usually treated with topical antibiotic ointments or eye drops containing sodium to prevent secondary bacterial infections. In cases where the [conjunctivitis](#) is related to herpes simplex, gonorrhea or Chlamydia, special precautions need to be taken, and your physician may even refer you to an ophthalmologist.

In the case of **allergic conjunctivitis**, your doctor may prescribe oral anti-histamines. However, these may dry the eyes, causing further complications. It is important to investigate all possible side effects of any medication your doctor may recommend and make an informed decision on what treatment will best suit your condition.

Home Care

Saline eye drops can be used to soothe the **discomfort of conjunctivitis**, as will a warm cloth held over the eyelid. In the case of allergic [conjunctivitis](#), it is important to find and remove or distance yourself from the source of the allergy, and you should try not to touch or rub the eyes.

A cold compress will **ease itchiness and provide some relief**. It is also a good idea to use an eye wash (using purified water) regularly throughout the day to speed up recovery. However, make sure that it is well-sterilized before hand, and if both eyes are infected, a separate eye washer should be used for each eye (or it should be re-sterilized between each use).

A Holistic Approach

Treating [conjunctivitis](#) is important, especially in cases where the condition is severe. If left untreated, [conjunctivitis](#) may become a recurrent problem or serious damage may be caused to eye tissue.

For this reason, it is essential to take an active approach towards your health and incorporate **natural healing remedies**, with a healthy diet and a few immune-boosting techniques that will have your eyes looking bright again in no time! The immune system plays an essential role in fighting off any infection, and so giving it a helping hand should be your first step of action.

Natural Remedies for Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis, like many eye ailments, is frustrating and bothersome. Luckily, nature has a few effective **herbal and homeopathic remedies** that help with **overall eye health** and swift recovery.

Herbal ingredients such as Aspalathus linearis (Rooibos) and Sutherlandia frutescens are powerful anti-oxidants and help to maintain a healthy supply of blood, oxygen and essential nutrients to the eye – all of which are essential to the rapid recovery from any eye condition.

Another essential herb commonly used for eye health is Vaccinium myrtillus (bilberry), which is used to **strengthen eye capillaries, prevent eye-related disease** and infection, and restore the eyes to their healthy, bright and problem-free state.

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Tips for Treating Conjunctivitis

In addition, there are a few **natural ways to help provide relief** and promote faster healing without any unwanted side-effects.

- Add a few drops of honey to your eye wash, as honey has antibacterial properties. Honey will also soothe the eye and promote faster healing.
- Grate a potato and place on the affected eye for 15 minutes. Potato is a natural astringent and will help reduce eye inflammation.
- Replace the water of your eyewash or compress with warm milk.
- For itchy eyes, try cooled tea bags on the eyes. The tannin in tea will help sooth itchiness and reduce inflammation. Using chamomile tea bags is an even better idea, as chamomile is well-known as an effective eye tonic.

Tips for the Prevention of Conjunctivitis

Conjunctivitis is highly contagious and it can easily be spread to your other eye, other people, and to yourself again once the initial infection has cleared. For this reason, a few precautions should always be taken if you or someone you know has conjunctivitis:

- Don't share towels, pillows, or washcloths with others, especially if they have [conjunctivitis](#) or other viral and bacterial conditions such as cold sores.
- Change pillowcases and wash towels and bedding frequently.
- Use immune system boosters to **to help prevent infection** as well as to encourage faster healing.
- As much as you may want to, refrain from touching your eyes! If your eyes are itchy, use a clean compress for quick relief.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after touching your eyes.
- Seek medical attention if you develop [conjunctivitis](#) when you have a cold sore, as herpes simplex-related [conjunctivitis](#) is a serious condition.
- Discard any make-up used when you had [conjunctivitis](#), as it may be contaminated, and this is an easy way to spread it again.
- If you wear contact lenses, switch to glasses until your eyes have completely healed.
- Wear sunglasses outdoors, as sunlight irritates [pink eye](#).

The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is **not the only treatment option**. Conventional Western medicine (often called allopathic or orthodox medicine) is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools, and many pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available and freely used-- even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is 'better' than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that **both have a role to**



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Natural medicine has often been frowned upon by conventional doctors, especially by those who do not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby **providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options** from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, **natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed** by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the **body has an innate capacity to heal itself**. While natural medicines are often called 'alternative' or 'complimentary' medicines, they are, in fact, a **unique and independent form of medicine** in their own right, well able to **treat a variety of conditions**. Perhaps the term 'holistic' medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine. This encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a **holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease**. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to **support health** (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer. In many cases, **holistic medicine can accomplish just as much**, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, **natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing**.

In many cases, they can **succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed**. Despite frequent reports that they are 'unproven' and 'untested', the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a **long history of usage** and there is a **wealth of empirical evidence** to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to **support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines**.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines **must be manufactured in the correct way**, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately, **not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards**, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and

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4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

5) We offer a free email [Ask Our Experts](#) service run by trained consultants ready to advise you on the best choice for your health.

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giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called 'standardized' extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While '**standardized**' extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have **grave disadvantages**, including an increase in side effects, as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which **retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb** as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, **always choose wisely**. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life-threatening condition, don't make changes without first discussing them with your doctor, in order that your condition may be monitored. **Well-informed and supportive practitioners will support patients** who want to take responsibility for their own health.

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The formula remains true to the **whole spectrum method** of herbal extraction, ensuring the bioavailability and balance of all the active ingredients contained in the remedy. This method of manufacture also significantly reduces the likelihood of side effects and maintains all active ingredients in perfect balance – exactly as nature intended!

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