Pinkeye Treatment

Self-Care at Home

Prevent spreading the infection to the other eye and to other people. Pinkeye can be very contagious, so limit your contacts with others until you are better.

- Carefully wash your hands every time you touch around your eye.
- Keep your own towels, washcloths, and pillows separate from others or use paper towels.
- Wash or change your pillowcase every day until the infection goes away.
- Do not touch your infected eye with your fingers. Use tissues to wipe.
- Do not wear eye makeup. Do not share eye makeup.
- Do not wear your contact lenses until the infection is gone.
- Put a warm compress, such as a washcloth soaked in warm water, on your eye for a few minutes, 3-4 times a day. This eases the pain and helps break up some of the crust that may form on your eyelashes.
- Use over-the-counter artificial tears to help with itching and irritation. Do not share eyedrops. You can spread the infection to anyone else who uses them.
- Do not put a patch over your eye. It may cause the infection to become worse.
- Do not use eyedrops for more than a few days unless instructed by your ophthalmologist. Worsening redness could result from repeated use of such products.

Medical Treatment

Your ophthalmologist may prescribe an eyedrop or ointment to help control the swelling and pain and to help prevent spread of the infection and further damage to your eye.

- Antibiotic eyedrops or ointments may be prescribed, as well as ocular decongestants, anti-allergy medicines, or anti-inflammatory medicines.
- Oral or intravenous antibiotics may be used if a sexually transmitted disease is thought to be the cause.
- Rarely, you may need to be admitted to the hospital for intravenous antibiotics and supportive care.
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- When to Seek Medical Care
- Exams and Tests
- Next Steps
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