

FACT SHEET

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)



South East
IPAC
HUB & SPOKE



EDUCATION
PRACTICE
POLICY
PARTNERS

Quinte | Rural Hastings | Rural Frimley | Lennox & Addington | Lanark, Leeds & Grenville

What is Conjunctivitis?

- Inflammation or infection of the conjunctiva (the transparent membrane covering the white of the eye and inner eyelids)
- Common causes: viruses (e.g., adenovirus), bacteria (e.g., *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*), allergens or irritants/chemicals

How does it spread?

- Direct contact with eye secretions via hands, tissues, towels
- Indirect contact via contaminated objects / surfaces such as phones, bedding, handrails
- Droplets spread in viral form via coughing/sneezing
- Poor hand hygiene increases risk !!

Types of Conjunctivitis

1. **Viral:** often linked to colds or respiratory infections – very contagious
2. **Bacterial:** caused by bacteria from skin, respiratory tract, or contaminated items – contagious
3. **Allergic:** triggered by allergens (e.g., pollen, dust), not contagious
4. **Chemical:** from irritants like cleaning products, chlorine – not contagious, but requires immediate care

Signs & Symptoms

- Red or pink eye(s)
- Eye irritation
- Eyelid crusting or mild eyelid swelling
- Watery discharge (viral/allergic)
- May occur in conjunction with upper respiratory symptoms (viral)
- Purulent/mucopurulent discharge (bacterial)

Older adults may have atypical or milder symptoms; monitor for new eye redness or discharge

Preventing Transmission

Routine Practices

- Perform 4 moments for hand hygiene
- Conduct Point of Care Risk Assessment and PPE accordingly

Environmental Cleaning

- Clean/disinfect high touch surfaces at least daily and more often if ongoing transmission
- Use a hospital grade, virucidal disinfectant with an **adenovirus kill claim, ensuring full contact time**
- Shared and reusable equipment must be cleaned and disinfected between uses



Additional Precautions

- Adenoviral conjunctivitis: contact precautions
- Bacterial conjunctivitis: routine practices are typically sufficient; implement contact precautions if drainage is heavy/uncontained, resident hygiene is poor, or there is evidence of spread
- Allergic/chemical conjunctivitis: not infectious; routine practices sufficient

ENCOURAGE RESIDENT HAND HYGIENE!

Clusters & Outbreak Preparedness

- Recognize symptoms early!
- Implement contact precautions for suspected adenoviral cases
- Notify PHU if transmission or cluster develops
- Audit hand hygiene and cleaning practices
- Monitor staff illness and exclude staff from work as recommended by Public Health



PHU and IPAC Hub can support with outbreak management!

