



Sequatchie Valley Planning & Development Agency
Sequatchie Valley Head Start

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

_____ A child in our program has conjunctivitis (also called “pinkeye”)

_____ Your child may have conjunctivitis.

Please take these precautions:

1. Watch your child and members of your family for signs of pinkeye.
2. See your health care provider if your child develops pinkeye. Your child may need to be given an eye medication.
3. Do not send your child to the program until the **day after** you start using medication. If your health care provider decides not to prescribe an eye medicine, ask for a note to send in with your child.
4. Tell us if your child is being treated for pinkeye.

Information about conjunctivitis:

What is it? Pinkeye is an infection of the eyes. It is most often caused by a virus, but can also be caused by bacteria. The white parts of the eyes become pink or red; the eyes may hurt, feel itchy or scratchy; and the eyes may produce lots of tears and discharge. In the mornings, the discharge (pus) may make the eyelids stick together. (Some children and adults have allergies that can cause everything listed here except pus.) Conjunctivitis is a mild illness and is **NOT** dangerous. Doctors usually prescribe an antibiotic eye medication just in case the infection is due to bacteria.

How do you catch conjunctivitis? The pus is infectious. If children rub their eyes, they get the bacteria on their hands. They can then touch someone’s eyes or hands or touch an object (toy or table). If other children get discharge on their hands and then touch their own eyes, they can catch it. It can spread easily among young children who touch their eyes and everything else and who do not know how (or forget) to wash their hands.

What should you do if your child has conjunctivitis?

1. Keep your child’s eyes wiped free of discharge. Use paper tissues and throw them away promptly.
2. **Always thoroughly wash your hands after wiping your child’s eyes.**
3. Teach your children to wash their hands after wiping their eyes.
4. Ask your health care provider if your child needs to receive eye medication.
5. Be sure to wash carefully anything that touches your child’s eyes (such as washcloths, towels, toy binoculars, and toy cameras).