



One minute guide to...

Conjunctivitis

What is it?

Conjunctivitis is an inflammation of the outer lining of the eye and eyelid causing an itchy red eye with a sticky or watery discharge. It can be caused by bacteria or viruses or due to an allergy.

Conjunctivitis can be caused by a bacteria or a virus and is treated with eye drops. Spread is by direct or indirect contact with discharge from the eyes. Prompt treatment and good hand washing helps to prevent spread especially after contact with infectious discharge.

What to do if you have children in your setting with conjunctivitis.

Advise parents to speak to a pharmacist or contact a GP

Encourage children not to rub their eyes and to wash their hand frequently with warm soapy water (supervise and support younger children to wash their hands).

Give children their own towels, face cloths and pillowcases at home and wash these in hot water and detergent after use.

Remind children to cover their mouth and nose when sneezing and put used tissues in the bin.

For further information about treatments, signs and symptoms follow this link

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/conjunctivitis>

Further information

Who to contact

For any queries about conjunctivitis in your setting, please email EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk

Settings such as nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and schools only need to inform [UKHSA](#) (formerly called PHE) if there is an outbreak of conjunctivitis (2 or more children in the same group/class with symptoms of conjunctivitis within 1 week). The Cumbria and Lancashire local UKHSA Health Protection team can be contacted on 0344 225 0562 or email: cl.hpt@phe.gov.uk