

The red eye: conjunctivitis

- If you have *any* red eye with pain, blurring of vision or discomfort in bright light or after wearing contact lenses, you must contact your doctor.
- Conjunctivitis is an infection of the conjunctiva, the thin transparent layer covering the white of your eye and the inside of your eyelids. One or both eyes become red and sticky, but your sight is not affected. Your eyes may feel gritty, but not painful.
- Your doctor will prescribe antibiotic eye drops or ointment to treat conjunctivitis. These take a few days to work. If your eye is very sticky, you can bathe it with cooled, boiled water and clean cotton wool. Do not place a pad over your eye because this will keep the infection in and make it worse.
- Conjunctivitis is quite infectious. Wash and dry your hands before and after using eye drops, and use separate towels and pillow cases to stop the infection spreading to others.
- If your child has conjunctivitis, they should not go to school or swim until it is better.

