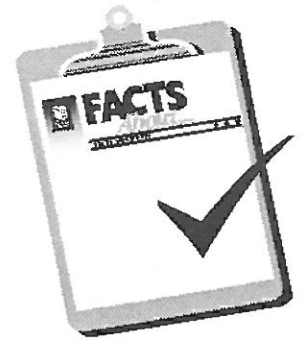




FACTS

About...



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)

What is it?

Pink eye is an infection of the covering of the eye and may be caused by both bacteria and viruses. Children younger than 5 years old often get pink eye.

How is it spread?

Pink eye spreads from one person to another. Tears, pus, touching the infected eye or runny nose of an infected person, sneezing or coughing can spread the bacteria.

What do I look for?

- Red, itchy and painful eye(s)
- Eye(s) sensitive to light
- Swollen eyelid(s)
- Pus draining from eye(s)
- Tears are common
- Crusting of eyelid(s) during sleep

How is it treated?

When pink eye is caused by bacteria, treatment with antibiotic eye drops or pills should be prescribed by your doctor. A warm, wet paper towel can be used to help remove the crust from around the eyes.

Children with pink eye should stay home until 24 hours after treatment begins, to prevent the spread of the disease.

How can I protect myself?

- Do not rub or touch the affected eye(s).
- Wash your hands often, especially after touching the eye(s).
- Do not share towels or wash cloths. Persons with pink eye should use paper towels until they are completely better. Pillowcases and bedding should not be shared – wash soiled items in soapy water.

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For more information

DURHAM REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT

905-668-7711 1-800-841-2729 or www.durham.ca