



Kapa'a Pediatrics, LLC

Conjunctivitis, Allergic

What is it? Allergic conjunctivitis occurs when allergens contact the surface of the eye and cause an allergic response that leads to inflammation in the eye. Common allergens include animal dander, dust mites, cockroaches, grass/tree, and molds.

What are the symptoms? Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference between allergic and infectious conjunctivitis but here are some of the common differences between the two.

Allergic Conjunctivitis: **Itchiness** (very itchy), **redness**, tearing (clear while awake, but may appear crusty or thick when waking up in the morning), eyelid swelling, surface of the eye swelling (looks like a blister is occurring), rapid onset within minutes, quick resolution <24 hours.

Infectious Conjunctivitis: Redness, **thick discharge** usually starts in one eye but can spread to both, discharge is noticed throughout the day while awake NOT only when awakening in the morning or after naps.

Treatment options: Generally this condition can be treated at home with the following steps. In addition, reference our allergy tips handout for preventative steps.

- 1) Remove contact lenses if applicable.
- 2) **DO NOT RUB EYES!** This is perhaps the most important step, as rubbing will lead to more inflammation, which will lead to more itchiness. If necessary you can even hold your child's hands for a short period until it gets better..
- 3) Rinsing eyes with regular water for a few seconds or artificial tears to remove any allergens.
- 4) Cool compresses. This can decrease inflammation, but maybe more importantly provides a barrier so that it is more difficult for them to itch and rub their eyes.
- 5) **Antihistamine drops** are very effective in most cases and **Ketotifen can be bought over the counter with no prescription.** Others may need a prescription, e.g, olopatadine, alcaftadine, bepotastine, azelastine, epinastine, or emedastine.

When to call your doctor:

- No improvement after 24 hours
- Eye pain develops, which is not commonly consistent with allergic conjunctivitis
- Eyelid swelling or swelling to the surface of the eye.

*** Patient handouts created by Kapa'a Pediatrics are intended to give parents the most common and pertinent facts about a certain issue. If there is ever any concern that your child was given an incorrect

diagnosis or is not following the usual expected course for an illness please call us to speak with a physician.
(808) 634-8011***