

Eye Infection - Bacterial

Definition

- Bacterial infection of the eye
- Main symptom is lots of yellow or green discharge (pus) in the eye

Health Information

Symptoms

- Yellow or green discharge or pus in the eye
- Dried pus on the eyelids and eyelashes
- The eyelids are stuck (matted) together with pus after sleep
- After being wiped away, the pus comes back during the day
- The white parts of the eye may or may not be red or pink
- The eyelids are often puffy (mildly swollen)

Cause

- Bacterial infection of the eye. This often occurs after having a cold in the eye. That means it will also have some redness as well as pus.
- A small amount of pus only in the eye corner is not important. Often, it's due to an irritant or virus.
- **Pinkeye.** When the white of the eye becomes pink or red, it's called pinkeye. Conjunctivitis is the medical name for pinkeye. The conjunctiva is the membrane that covers the white part of the eye. It becomes pink when it is infected or irritated.
- Sometimes a bacterial eye infection will occur without a cold. In this case, there may not be any redness of the eye.

Prevention of Spread to Others

- Good hand washing can prevent spread of infection.
- The pus can spread infection to others. So, dispose of it carefully.
- Wash your hands well after any contact with the pus.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- Bacterial eye infections are common.
- They respond to home treatment with antibiotic eye drops.
- They are not harmful to vision.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Remove Pus:

- Remove all the dried and liquid pus from the eyelids. Use warm water and wet cotton balls to do this.
- Do this whenever pus is seen on the eyelids.
- Also, remove the pus before the antibiotic eye drops are put in. Reason: They will not work if you don't.
- Wash your hands well after any contact with the pus.

3. **Antibiotic Eye Drops:**

- Your child needs antibiotic eye drops to clear up the eye infection. Antibiotic eye drops need a prescription.
- The antibiotic eye drops will kill the bacteria that are causing the eye infection.
- Give the eye drops as directed. Usually this means 1 drop 4 times a day.
- Try not to forget any of the doses.
- Continue until wakes up in the morning without any pus for 2 days.
- Use an eye drop in both eyes, even if only one is infected. Reason: The other eye will usually become infected.
- The antibiotic eye drops can be used for siblings with the same symptoms.

4. **Antibiotic Eye Drops - How to Give:**

- For a cooperative child, gently pull down on the lower lid. Put 1 drop inside the lower lid. Then ask your child to close the eye for 2 minutes. Reason: So the medicine will get into the tissues.
- For a child who won't open his eye, have him lie down. Put 1 drop over the inner corner of the eye. When your child opens the eye or blinks, the eye drop will flow in. If he doesn't open the eye, the drop will slowly seep into the eye.

5. **Contact Lenses:**

- Children who wear contact lenses need to switch to glasses until the infection is gone.
- Reason: To prevent damage to the cornea.
- Disinfect the contacts before wearing them again.
- Discard them if they are disposable.

6. **What to Expect:**

- With treatment, the pus discharge should clear up in 3 days. Reason: the pus is due to a bacteria.
- The red eyes may last up to a week. Reason: The redness may be due to a virus.

7. **Return to School:**

- Your child can return to school when the pus is gone or small amount.
- Antibiotic eye drops should be used for 24 hours before going back.

Call Your Doctor If

- Eyelid gets red or swollen
- Pus lasts more than 3 days
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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