Eye Concerns

Overview

Eye redness and drainage (called conjunctivitis) can be caused by a myriad of things: injury or something in the eye, allergies, viral illness, and/or bacterial infection.

Viral Conjunctivitis

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Eye drainage coinciding with common cold symptoms such as nasal drainage, cough, and possibly fevers are often caused by viral infections. As long as there is no pain or significant itching, the likely cause is the same virus that is creating the cold symptoms.

Allergic Conjunctivitis

More watery, clear eye drainage with itching of eyes and redness that coincides with seasonal allergies, clear nasal drainage, and sneezing is likely allergic conjunctivitis. If there is no pain or swelling, and no thick yellow drainage, then this is likely not a bacterial infection.

Bacterial Conjunctivitis

This is commonly known as “pink eye”, and is highly contagious as touching or itching the eye and having contact with another child can quickly spread this bacteria. As with viral and allergic conjunctivitis, the eye becomes red with drainage. However, the drainage is yellow and very thick, often creating a sealed layer over the eyelids. Eyes are often sealed shut and crusted over in the mornings, and wiping away the drainage only helps temporarily. The eye is itchy and feels “gritty”, often becoming painful if untreated. This requires antibiotic eye drops. Call our office for an appointment if these are your child’s symptoms.

Serious Signs or Symptoms

Significant eye pain, penetrating eye injury, vision changes, or vision loss (despite clearing away eye drainage), swelling around eye with redness to tissues surrounding the eye, blistering sores in linear pattern nearing or around the eye

Questions?

This sheet provides general advice and is not specific for your individual child. Always call if something seems off or if you have specific questions or concerns!

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