

## *What You Need to Know*

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### **What is pinkeye?**

Pinkeye is an infection of the eye caused by a virus. Viruses are in the drainage from the eye. Pinkeye is easily spread from one eye to the other or to other people by contact with this drainage.

### **What are the symptoms of pinkeye?**

- Crusts that form on the eyelid overnight
- Gritty feeling in the eyes
- Redness in the eye
- Sensitivity to light
- Increased tearing

### **How long after exposure to the bacteria before the first signs of illness appear?**

One to three days after exposure.

### **What is the treatment for pinkeye?**

Pinkeye usually disappears on its own within 7-10 days. Some doctors may give a mild antibiotic eye drop or ointment. You can apply a clean cloth soaked in warm water to soothe discomfort. Children attending day care or school should be excluded until they receive medical care or the drainage has cleared.

### **How can pinkeye be prevented?**

Wash your hands often. Avoid touching your eyes. Change your pillowcase and sheets often. Do not share towels, washcloths, handkerchiefs, eye drops or cosmetics. Handle and clean contact lenses properly.

### **Hand washing instructions:**

- Use soap and running water
- Rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds
- Wash all surfaces, including:
  - Back of hands
  - Wrists
  - Between fingers
  - Under fingernails
- Rinse well
- Dry hands with a paper towel
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands

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