

CANNON FALLS AREA SCHOOLS

Health Office

Dear Parent/Guardian: There is a child in your child's class who has been diagnosed with conjunctivitis.

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINKEYE)

Conjunctivitis is a common eye infection in young children. Bacterial conjunctivitis, which is of most concern in the childcare setting, occurs often in children under five years of age. Viral conjunctivitis is often experienced along with the common cold or other mild cold-like illnesses.

CAUSE: Bacteria, viruses, allergies, eye injuries, or chemicals.

SYMPTOMS: Bacterial: Pink or red eyeball, pain or redness of the eyelids, white or yellow eye discharge (pus), often with matted eyelids after sleep. Viral: Pink eyeball with a clear, watery discharge and **without** fever, eye pain or eyelid redness.

SPREAD: Bacterial and viral infections can be spread by contact with the secretions from the eyes, nose and mouth.

INCUBATION: It takes about one to three days after exposure for symptoms to begin.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD: Until the active infection passes.

EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL: For bacterial conjunctivitis, child is excluded from school until seen by doctor and he/she has received 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.

PREVENTION/CONTROL:

1. Keep children's eyes wiped free of discharge. Avoid contact with eye drainage.
2. Dispose of tissues.
3. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after contact with eye drainage.
4. **DO NOT** share any articles, such as towels and wash cloths.
5. Clean and disinfect mouthed toys at least daily and when soiled. Try to prevent sharing of toys when conjunctivitis is present.
6. Diagnosis: If your child has white or yellow eye drainage, discuss recent exposure to this infection with your healthcare provider.
7. Treatment: Antibiotic treatment (eye ointment or drops) may be prescribed.