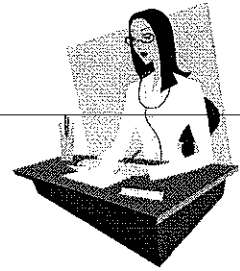




## A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE



### Health Alert

There has been a case of Conjunctivitis reported in your child's classroom. Please read the following.

### **CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE)**

#### **What is conjunctivitis? What are the signs of Conjunctivitis?**

Conjunctivitis is an inflammation (irritation) of the eyes. It can result from infection with a virus or bacterium; it can also be caused by allergies or chemicals (medication, gas fumes, chlorine from swimming pools, etc.).

Infectious (viral or bacterial) conjunctivitis is very contagious. It spreads from person to person by direct contact with discharge from the eyes.

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

Conjunctivitis can cause redness, itching, or pain. There is usually a discharge, which may be thick (yellow or green) or watery. The eyelids may be swollen and slightly pink, and the eyelashes may be stuck together when the child awakens in the morning.

Children with conjunctivitis sometimes develop an ear infection. Contact your physician if you observe any of the following signs: irritability, poor sleep, loss of appetite, or tugging or hitting at the ears.

Conjunctivitis does not usually cause fever. High fever may signal a more serious condition, such as Cellulitis-a bacterial infection characterized by swelling, warmth, tenderness, and a red or purple discoloration around the eye. Cellulitis requires prompt medical attention.

#### **Prevention and Treatment**

Bacterial infections are treated with antibiotics. Some are taken by mouth: others are in the form of drops or ointment and are put directly into the eye. Children with infectious conjunctivitis are considered contagious until twenty-four hours after antibiotic treatment is begun. Careful hand washing is important in preventing spread of the disease.

If you suspect infectious conjunctivitis, keep your child at home and contact your physician.