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# YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

*Presented by the medical professionals at Midcoast Pediatrics*

## CONJUNCTIVITIS

Your child complains that it feels like something is stuck in his or her eye. The eyelid is swollen, the whites of the eyes are pink, and there's some yellowish discharge built up in the corner. Your child has pinkeye infection. Pinkeye (conjunctivitis) is the inflammation of the conjunctiva, the membrane that lines the eye. It's quite common and usually not serious, but it does cause some discomfort for a child. Either viral or bacterial, it's extremely contagious, often spread by poor hand washing or sharing washcloths. A child with viral pinkeye can return to daycare or school in three to five days. If bacterial pinkeye is diagnosed and antibiotics are prescribed, the child can return within 24 hours.

*HINT: Viral pinkeye lasts one to two weeks. Bacterial pinkeye requires antibiotics to improve.*

**To prevent conjunctivitis, teach your child to wash their hands often with warm water and soap. They also should not share eye drops, tissues, eye makeup, washcloths, towels, or pillowcases with other people. If you would like further information about anything discussed in today's column, call MIDCOAST PEDIATRICS at 207-721-8333. We are located at 121 Medical Center Drive, Suite 2600, Brunswick. New patients are welcome.**

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