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Further sources of information
NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions
Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)
PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.
King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222
Newark Hospital: 01636 685692
Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net. This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 2789.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Conjunctivitis (bacterial and viral)

Emergency Department

King's Mill Hospital
Mansfield Road
Sutton in Ashfield
Notts NG17 4JL
Telephone: 01623 622515, extension 2789

Newark Hospital
Boundary Road
Newark
Notts NG24 4DE
Telephone: 01636 681681

Conjunctivitis is usually an infection or inflammation of the outer layer of the eye (or the conjunctiva). It can occur if you have a cold or have been near someone with a cold. Conjunctivitis is not usually serious, but it can affect both eyes and can be passed from person to person. Conjunctivitis is sometimes referred to as 'pink' or 'red' eye.

Bacterial conjunctivitis normally causes a yellow or green sticky discharge throughout the day. Eyes will feel itchy, and the eyelids may become swollen.

Viral conjunctivitis normally causes a watery discharge during the day and sticky discharge in the morning. The eyelids may become very swollen.

Bacterial conjunctivitis can be treated with antibiotic drops or ointment, as this may help to speed up the process to clear the infection within around five to seven days. However, it should get better without any drops or ointment.

For viral conjunctivitis there is currently no effective treatment, but artificial tears (visit your local pharmacist for advice), using a cold compress (such as clean cotton wool balls soaked in cold water), and a pain killer such as ibuprofen may make the eyes feel more comfortable – check with your pharmacist on whether you are able to take this and always follow dosage instructions. Antibiotic drops or ointment will not help with viral conjunctivitis.

To prevent spread to others please use your own face cloth, towels, handkerchief, etc.

When to seek advice?

Visit your GP or go to your nearest Emergency Department if your sight becomes:

- More blurred over time, changes in your vision, like wavy lines or flashing.
- If the pain and redness are getting a lot worse.
- The light starts to hurt your eyes (photophobia).
- Intense redness in one or both eyes.