

FACT SHEET: Trachoma

Trachoma is a bacterial infection that affects the eyes. It is highly infectious and is often passed from mother to child. Blindness occurs when recurring infections scar the cornea. Eventually, the eyelashes can turn inwards.

Symptoms

Those affected by trachoma can display the following symptoms:

- Eye swelling, irritation and conjunctivitis
- Swelling of areas around the eye
- An opaque cornea
- Eyelashes turned inwards

Trachoma is spread by direct contact with eye, nose, and throat secretions from affected individuals, or contact with objects such as towels or washcloths that have had similar contact with these secretions. Flies can also be a route of transmission.

Prevention

Good hygiene can significantly lower the rates of infection. This includes:

- Washing your hands regularly
- Washing your face regularly
- Wiping flies away from your face
- Locating toilets away from general living areas