



Preventing eye injuries

Eye injuries are very common. In fact, each year in the United States more than 1 million people injure their eyes. However, 9 out of 10 of those injuries could have been prevented just by wearing protective eyewear.

Here are ways to protect your eyes and save your vision.

Stay safe at home

About half (1 out of 2) of eye injuries happen at home. They happen when people do home repairs, yard work, cleaning and cooking. Nearly all of these injuries could have been prevented with safety eyewear.



Every household should have at least one pair of "ANSI-approved" protective eyewear.

ANSI-approved means the eyewear meets protection guidelines from the American National Standards Institute. Protective eyewear includes goggles and face masks. It also includes eyeglasses that are marked "ANSI Z87.1"

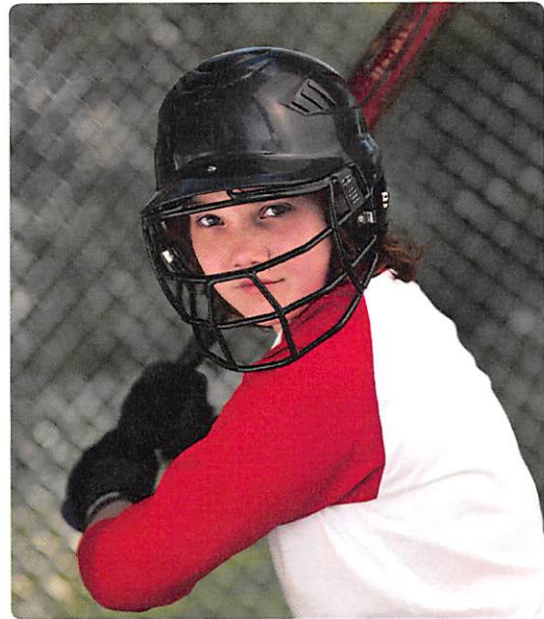
Here are tips to remember to keep your eyes safe at home.

- Common household cleaning products like bleach, ammonia and sprays are dangerous to your eyes. Always wear safety goggles when using cleaning products. Goggles help shield your eyes from dangerous splashes and sprays.
- Always check first to make sure the nozzle of a spray bottle or can is pointed away from you.
- Put a grease shield over your frying pan. This helps protect your eyes from any hot grease or oil splatters when cooking.
- Wear safety glasses when using lawn mowers, trimmers or similar garden tools. Before mowing, remove sticks and stones from the ground to prevent them from shooting from the mower.
- Make sure there are no children nearby when you mow the lawn. Keep them safe from getting an eye injury.
- Watch out for low-hanging branches when gardening or enjoying the outdoors.
- When working on household repairs or projects, always wear goggles that completely cover the eyes. Flying fragments, dust and sparks cause many injuries in unprotected eyes.

Car trouble can mean eye trouble

When working on a car, your eyes are at risk for injury. Strong chemicals like battery acid are dangerous to the eye. Sparks and fumes can catch fire or explode.

- Do not smoke or use a lighter or matches when opening the car's hood. If you need to see under the hood, use a flashlight.
- Wear protective goggles when working on metal, such as making auto body repairs.
- Never jump-start a car that has a cracked or leaking battery. The battery could explode and send acid and bits of material into your eyes.



Wear protective eyewear while playing sports

Safety at play

Always protect your eyes when playing sports. This is especially important in sports with a ball or other item that can fly at the eye. This includes:

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Football
- Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Tennis and other racquet sports

Talk with your eye doctor to find out what kind of sports protective eyewear you need. If you wear prescription eyeglasses, they should have non-breakable frames and safety lenses made of polycarbonate.

Boxing and full-contact martial arts put you at high risk for serious, blinding eye injuries. There is no satisfactory eye protection for boxing (although thumbless gloves may be somewhat helpful).

Children's toys and games can be dangerous to their eyes. Try not to buy toys or games that have darts, pellets, or other flying pieces. Think about the child's age and how well they can protect their eyes.

Celebrate safely

An eye injury takes the fun out of a celebration. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Fireworks can be dangerous to people of all ages. Attend only fireworks displays that are run by professionals.
- Never allow children to light fireworks or stand near anyone who is.
- A champagne cork can fly at 50 miles per hour when it leaves the bottle. That is fast enough to shatter glass—and too fast for you to get out of the way in time.
- To open a champagne bottle safely:
 - Point the bottle at an angle away from yourself and others.
 - Hold down the cork with the palm of your hand while removing the wire hood.
 - Wrap a towel completely around the cork as you slowly twist the bottle at its base to open it.

Treating eye injuries right away

If you or someone else injures their eye, get medical help immediately. Getting treated quickly and correctly can help lessen the damage or perhaps even prevent vision loss.

There are steps you can take right away after an eye injury to help.

- If you get a speck or tiny object in your eye, do not rub your eye. Instead, holding your eyelashes, carefully lift your upper eyelid and place it over the lower lid. This allows the lower lashes to brush away that object or
- If you get a speck in your eye, blink several times. If the speck does not go away, blink a few times. If this does not help, keep your eye closed and get medical help.
- If you get a cut in the eye or eyelid, get medical help right away. Do not rub your eye, rinse your eye or apply any pressure to it. If you can, tape a paper cup over your eye to keep anything from touching it. Try not to cough, sneeze, bend down, or lift any objects while waiting for medical help.
- If you get hit in the eye, put ice or a cold compress on your eye. This helps reduce pain and swelling. See a doctor right away if you have a black eye or blurry vision, as these can be signs of eye damage.
- If you get a chemical in your eye, immediately flush your eye with lukewarm water. Use your fingers to keep the eye open. Here is how to flush your eye:
 - Hold your head under a faucet or shower or gently pour water from a container. Flush your eye with water for at least 15 minutes.
 - “Roll” your eye (as if looking around) while flushing it with water. This helps clean out the chemical.
 - Get medical help right away. Some chemical still may be in your eye even if you think you flushed it away.

Summary

Eye injuries are common. About half of all eye injuries happen at home. Nearly 9 out of 10 eye injuries could be prevented simply by wearing protective eyewear. There are different kinds of safety glasses, masks and goggles designed for all kinds of uses.

Follow tips for eye safety, at home, in sports and while celebrating. And, get medical help right away if you have an eye injury. Quick and correct treatment can save your vision.

If you have any questions about your eyes or your vision, speak with your ophthalmologist. He or she is committed to protecting your sight.

Get more information about eye injuries from EyeSmart—provided by the American Academy of Ophthalmology—at aao.org/injuries-link.

COMPLIMENTS OF:

