

Summer Eye Safety

Dr. David Nelson

Sports Eye Safety

Approximately 40,000 people a year suffer eye injuries while playing sports. Sports-related eye injuries occur most frequently in baseball, basketball and racquet sports. The good news is, almost all sports-related eye injuries can be prevented and there are new and fashionable options for safety prescription eyewear. Whatever your game, whatever your age, you need to protect your eyes!

Take the following steps to avoid sports eye injuries:

- Know that regular glasses DO NOT provide enough protection.
- Wear proper safety goggles with polycarbonate lenses for racquet sports or basketball. Polycarbonate lenses offer shatter-resistance, ultraviolet protection, and lightweightness
- Use batting helmets with polycarbonate face shields for youth baseball.
- Use helmets and face shields approved by the U.S. Amateur Hockey Association when playing hockey.

Home Eye Safety

The average home is full of dangers that often go unnoticed. Accidents involving common household products cause 125,000 eye injuries each year. Ninety percent of these eye injuries can be prevented through understanding, safety practices and the use of proper eye protection. You can reduce the risks of eye injuries for you and your family by using the following checklist for different areas of your home:

Indoor Safety

- Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Provide lights and handrails to improve safety on stairs.
- Pad or cushion sharp corners and edges of furnishing and home fixtures.
- Install cabinet and drawer locks in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Store personal-use items (cosmetics, toiletry products), kitchen utensils, and desk supplies where they are out of reach for children.

Outdoor Safety

- Inspect and remove debris from lawns before mowing.
- Keep paints, pesticides, fertilizers, and similar products properly stored in a secure area.
- Keep your tools in good condition; damaged tools should be repaired or replaced.
- Wear safety glasses or dust goggles to protect against flying particles, and chemical goggles to guard against exposure to fertilizers and pesticides.

Chemical Safety

- Know that regular eyeglasses DO NOT provide enough protection.
- Wear chemical safety goggles when using hazardous solvents and detergents.
- Read and follow all manufacturer instructions and warning labels.
- Do not mix cleaning agents.

Kids' Safety

- Avoid toys with sharp or rigid points, shafts, spikes, rods, and dangerous edges.
- Keep toys intended for older children away from younger children.
- Avoid flying toys and projectile-firing toys; these pose a danger to all children, particularly those under five years old.
- Be aware of items in playgrounds and play areas that pose potential eye hazards.
- Keep BB guns away from kids.
- Use infant and child safety seats, booster seats, safety belts, and shoulder harnesses in cars.

Recommended Eye Protection

Baseball

Recommended protection:

- Faceguard (attached to helmet) made of polycarbonate material
- Sports eyeguards

Injuries prevented:

- Scratches on the cornea
- Inflamed iris
- Blood spilling into the eye's anterior chamber
- Traumatic cataract
- Swollen retina

Basketball

Recommended protection:

- Sports eyeguards

Injuries prevented:

- Fracture of the eye socket
- Scratches on the cornea
- Inflamed iris
- Blood spilling into the eye's anterior chamber
- Swollen retina

Soccer

Recommended protection:

- Sports eyeguards

Injuries prevented:

- Inflamed iris
- Blood spilling into the eye's anterior chamber
- Swollen retina

Football

Recommended protection:

- Polycarbonate shield attached to a faceguard
- Sports eyeguards

Injuries prevented:

- Scratches on the cornea
- Inflamed iris
- Blood spilling into the eye's anterior chamber
- Swollen retina

Hockey

Recommended protection:

- Wire or polycarbonate mask
- Sports eyeguards

Injuries prevented:

- Scratches on the cornea
- Inflamed iris
- Blood spilling into the eye's anterior chamber
- Traumatic cataract
- Swollen retina