

Safety Matters

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Protecting Your Vision

March is Save Your Vision Month. According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, more than 20 million Americans suffer from severe vision loss. While not all eye diseases can be prevented, there are simple steps that everyone can take to help their eyes remain healthy now and reduce their chances of vision loss in the future.

Here are the top 10 tips from the Academy to safeguard your vision:

1. Wear sunglasses while outside

UV blocking sunglasses delay the development of cataracts, since direct sunlight hastens their formation. Sunglasses prevent retinal damage; they also protect the delicate eyelid skin to prevent both wrinkles and skin cancer around the eye, and both cancerous and non-cancerous growths on the eye. Check for 100 percent UV protection: Make sure your sunglasses block 100 percent of UV-A rays and UV-B rays.

2. Don't smoke

Tobacco smoking is directly linked to many adverse health effects, including age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Studies show that current smokers and ex-smokers are more likely to develop AMD than people who have never smoked. Smokers are also at increased risk for developing cataracts.

3. Eat right

Vitamin deficiency can impair retinal function. The belief that eating carrots improves vision has some truth, but a variety of vegetables, especially leafy green ones, should be an important part of your diet. Researchers have found people on diets with higher levels of vitamins C and E, zinc, lutein, zeaxanthin, omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA are less likely to develop early and advanced AMD.

4. Baseline eye exam

Adults with no signs or risk factors for eye disease should get a baseline eye disease screening at age 40 — the time when early signs of disease and changes in vision may start to occur. Based on the results of the initial screening, an ophthalmologist will prescribe the necessary intervals for follow-up exams. Anyone with symptoms or a family history of eye disease, diabetes or high blood pressure should see an ophthalmologist to determine how frequently your eyes should be examined.

5. Eye protection

An estimated 2.5 million eye injuries occur in the U.S. each year. Always wear eye protection at work when the eyes or your vision could be injured. But, it is also critical to wear proper eye protection to prevent eye injuries during sports such as hockey and baseball and home projects such as home repairs, gardening, and cleaning. For most repair projects and activities around the home, standard ANSI-approved protective eyewear will be sufficient. Sports eye protection should meet the specific requirements of that sport; these requirements are usually established and certified by the sport's governing body and/or the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).

6. Know your family history

Many eye diseases cluster in families, so you should know your family's history of eye disease because you may be at increased risk. Age-related eye diseases, including cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration are increasing dramatically.

7. Early intervention

Most serious eye conditions, such as glaucoma and AMD, are more easily and successfully treated if diagnosed and treated early. Left untreated, these diseases can cause serious vision loss and blindness. Early intervention now will prevent vision loss later.

8. Know your eye care provider

When you go to get your eyes checked, there are a variety of eye care providers you might see. Ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians all play an important role in providing eye care services to consumers. However, each has a different level of training and expertise. Make sure you are seeing the right provider for your condition or treatment. Ophthalmologists are specially trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care, from prescribing glasses and contact lenses to complex and delicate eye surgery.

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EYE INJURY FIRST AID

If your eye is injured, it's tempting to think you can just flush it out with some cold water and it will be fine. However, it's not easy to judge the extent or severity of any eye injury, so **you should always get immediate, professional medical attention.**

Here are some steps you can take in the event of an eye injury (these tips are not meant to replace professional medical attention):

Trauma to the Eye If you are hit in the eye, rest a protective shield — such as a Styrofoam cup — on the bone around your eye. Make sure there is no pressure on the eye itself. Seek immediate, professional medical attention.

Foreign Body If an object has entered your eye, do not try to remove it; you may tear delicate tissue or force the object in deeper. Rest a protective shield — again, like a Styrofoam cup — on the bone around your eye, making sure there is no pressure on the eye itself. Seek immediate professional medical attention.

Black Eye If you are hit in the eye area, place an ice pack or cold cloth over your eye. Even in cases where trauma seems minor, every eye injury should be given medical attention. Get immediate, professional medical attention.

Chemical Burn If your eye has sustained a chemical burn, rinse it with fresh water for at least 20 to 30 minutes. Hold your head under the tap or use a clean container to pour water into your eye. As you rinse, use your fingers to hold your eye open as wide as possible and roll your eye to ensure the greatest possible coverage. Get immediate, professional medical attention.

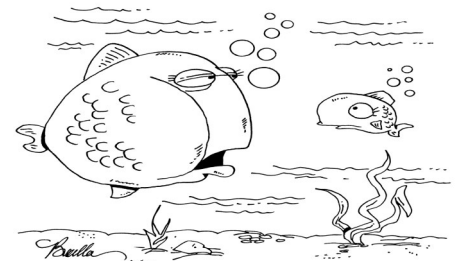
PROTECTING YOUR VISION (continued)

9. Contact lens care

Follow your ophthalmologist's instructions regarding the care and use of contact lenses. Abuse, such as sleeping in contacts that are not approved for overnight wear, using saliva or water as a wetting solution, using expired solutions, and using disposable contact lenses beyond their wear can result in corneal ulcers, severe pain and even vision loss.

10. Be aware of eye fatigue

If you have eye strain from working at a computer or doing close work, you can follow the 20-20-20 rule: Look up from your work every 20 minutes at an object 20 feet away for twenty seconds. If eye fatigue persists, it can be a sign of several different conditions, such as dry eye, presbyopia, or spectacles with lenses that are not properly centered. See an ophthalmologist to determine why you are having eye fatigue and to receive proper treatment.



"I have put on a few pounds, but it's mostly water weight."

ST. PATRICK'S DAY RIDDLES

1. Why do leprechauns recycle?
2. What kind of bow cannot be tied?
3. What do you call an Irish spider?
4. How is a good friend like a 4 leaf clover?

Answers on Page 2

March is Childhood Poisoning Prevention Month

Children Act Fast, So Do Poisons

It only takes seconds for children to get a hold of something poisonous. Two of the characteristics that we usually nurture and encourage in our kids – intelligence and curiosity – can be disastrous when it comes to keeping them safe.

Did you know that someone calls a U.S. poison control center about every 12 seconds? Every year poison control centers help over a million parents and caregivers when kids get into things that could harm them, like medicines, cleaning chemicals, even the mushrooms growing in the backyard! Poisoning is the #1 cause of injury death in the U.S., and the number of children who die from poisoning each year has more than doubled since 1999. Over half of the cases managed by poison control centers each year involve children 12 and under.

The vast majority of these cases involve kids swallowing something, but poisoning can happen via the eyes, skin, and lungs, too. Here are the top ten substances involved in calls to poison control for kids 12 and under:

1. Cosmetics and personal care products, like hand sanitizer, deodorant, and nail polish remover
2. Household cleaning products
3. Pain relieving medicines, both over-the-counter and prescription
4. Foreign bodies like toys and coins
5. Medicinal creams, like acne cream and hydrocortisone cream
6. Anti-allergy medicines
7. Vitamins, especially chewable vitamins that taste good
8. Pesticides and insect repellants
9. Dietary Supplements, herbals, and homeopathic remedies
10. Plants, both indoor and outdoor

The experts that answer the poison control hotline 24/7, year-round want parents and caregivers to understand that *anything*, even water, can be poisonous when used in the wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person. And poisoning is not just about swallowing something dangerous. Poisoning can happen via the eyes, skin, and lungs, too. So, keeping your kids safe from accidental poisoning is not about getting everything that might be toxic out of your house. That would be an impossible charge, and really inconvenient, too! Rather, effective poisoning prevention is about taking precautions when it comes to using, storing, and discarding household substances, and being prepared in the event that the unthinkable happens.

Prevent Childhood Poisoning and Protect the Children in Your Life

BE PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY. Make sure you have the national, free number for poison control saved in your phone and posted in your home. That number is 1 (800) 222-1222. Anyone can call any time, whether it's an emergency, or if you just have questions about a product or substance. Don't be embarrassed to call; calls are private, and poison specialists have heard it all!

PRACTICE SAFE STORAGE HABITS. The following substances are particularly dangerous for kids and should be stored up, away, and out of sight. Alternatively, keep these substances in child-resistant cabinets or containers. Keep in mind that there is no such thing as a child-proof lock or container, and there is no substitution for adult supervision and vigilance.

- o All medications and pharmaceuticals, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and supplements
- o Alcoholic beverages, and products that contain alcohol, like hand sanitizer and screen cleaners
- o Tobacco and e-cigarette products, especially liquid nicotine
- o Laundry and cleaning supplies, especially single load laundry detergent packets
- o Pesticides and insect repellants
- o Button batteries, like those found in singing greeting cards, key fobs, and remote controls
- o Any type of oil or lubricant, including fragrance oils, tiki torch oils, engine oil, etc.
- o Personal care products, such as hair products and contact lens disinfectants
- o Other chemicals, such as antifreeze

READ AND FOLLOW LABELS AND DIRECTIONS. Make a habit of reviewing the label on anything that has one prior to use, *especially* before administering medications to children. Take care to follow not only usage directions, but the directions provided for safe storage and disposal as well. Call your poison control center at **1 (800) 222-1222** if you have any questions about the directions.

The old saying is true – an ounce of caution is really worth a pound of cure. But if you find yourself needing help, don't hesitate to call your poison control center

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Identify all the potential eye hazards in your work area and for your specific work tasks. Ensure there are proper safeguards in place to prevent an eye injury. If there is a safeguard missing, stop the work task and correct the problem;

If you get something in your eye do not rub or scratch it. Rubbing the eye can cause scratching of the cornea resulting in injury. Find an eye wash station or saline bottle to rinse out the object.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

“Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

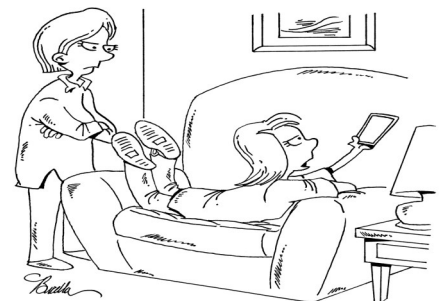
WORKPLACE AND CONSTRUCTION SAFETY STATISTICS

Workplace injuries, accidents, and even fatalities are something every job site tries desperately to avoid. Across the world, measures are taken to provide a safe working environment for workers. However, despite active safety measures and enforcement from legal entities, accidents do happen. Consider these eye-opening construction and general industry safety statistics:

- ◆ Over a 45 year career, a construction worker has a 1 in 200 chance of being fatally injured on the job
- ◆ Nearly half of all deaths on construction sites occur in companies with ten or fewer employees or among those who are self-employed
- ◆ Roofers in construction are said to have the 4th deadliest job in the world with a fatality rate of 39.7 per 100,000 workers
- ◆ Carpenters have the lowest fatality rate in jobs considered as construction jobs, at 6.7 fatalities per 100,000 workers
- ◆ In the U.S., the state of Texas has the most construction fatalities; Maine has the least
- ◆ Globally, 2.3 million people die due to work-related accidents, injuries or diseases each year
- ◆ Globally, around 651,279 deaths/year are from diseases related to hazardous materials
- ◆ There are 6000 deaths/day globally from workplace accidents or disease
- ◆ Globally, 313 million people are injured each year at work
- ◆ Worker deaths on average in the U.S. are declining, from about 38 worker deaths a day in 1970 to 14 a day in 2017
- ◆ Worker injuries and illnesses are down from 10.9 incidents per 100 workers in 1972 to 2.8 per 100 in 2017
- ◆ Nearly one-third of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses resulted in days away from work
- ◆ The American Society of Safety Engineers found in a recent study that for every dollar spent on a quality safety and health program, businesses saved \$8.

The next time you consider taking a shortcut or ignoring an established safety procedure remember that your decision could make you one of the above statistics. Think safety, act safely, be safe!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



“We have it easy? Your generation didn't have to worry about having to document every minute of your life.”

ST. PATRICK'S DAY RIDDLES ANSWERS

1. They like to go green!
2. A rainbow!
3. Paddy O'Long Legs
4. They are both hard to find!