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**Queensland Eye Institute &
Prevent Blindness Foundation**

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General Eye Safety



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Eye injuries often lead to blindness but most can be avoided. The dangers to look out for and avoid include **Impact** - from flying objects and debris. **Burns** - from flames, chemicals or sparks. **Ultraviolet radiation** - from welding. **Glare** - this affects your ability to see well and work safely.

HOME DIY Always wear appropriate safety equipment and eyewear. Be especially careful when working under a car, grinding or sanding metal, using a mechanical saw or hammering. Take great care when working with concrete and lime as the ocular burns that they cause can be blinding. Elastic fastening straps are a very common cause of severe eye injuries. Try to use a safer alternative such as a ratchet fastening non-elastic strap.

GARDENING Edge trimmers and lawnmowers can cause flying debris that can injure both you and the people around you. Keep children and other adults inside the house when you are using this equipment.

IN THE WORKPLACE Ensure you and your workplace meet all the required health and safety regulations. Always wear effective safety goggles or face shields when required. Welding, including spot or tack welding requires a dedicated face mask, never weld without one. Always take great care around chemicals, steam, hot materials, construction sites and where grinding or hammering is being performed.

SPORTS Sports with a high risk of eye injury include squash/racquet sports, paintball and all contact sports. Always wear safety eyewear for racquet sports and paintball. Always use common sense and good judgement when playing sports with a high risk of injury to the eye.

CHILDREN Pencils and crayons can cause severe eye injuries. Always supervise children closely when playing with these. There are many “child safe” drawing texters available that have soft tips and no sharp ends. Always supervise children when they are playing with pets and do not allow them to play with pets that are not accustomed to children. Ensure that children’s toys are age and activity appropriate and meet government safety standards. Toddlers eyes are often at a similar height to table edges and corners so apply soft foam edges in areas when toddlers walk and play. All chemicals, detergents and cleaners should be stored in a locked cabinet or well out of children’s reach and keep children away from home DIY or building projects. If your child has reduced vision in one eye then consider getting them polycarbonate lenses to protect the good eye, even if they do not otherwise need spectacles. All children should have an eye test by age 4 and then as required.

SAFETY GLASSES Speak to your optometrist about appropriate safety glasses. Wearing normal spectacles is not a substitute for safety glasses. Safety glasses can be made with your script incorporated into them in a variety of frames but they should always have side shields for appropriate protection. Ensure that safety goggles fit properly and are not damaged.

BASIC FIRST AID Any chemical or thermal injury to the eyes requires immediate and thorough irrigation. If a dedicated eye wash station is not available use gentle running drinkable water from a shower, tap, garden hose or bottled water. If you are wearing them, contact lenses should be removed. Seek medical advice urgently if the eye is painful or there is reduced vision. If a foreign object has gone into the eye do not try and rub it out. If your tears do not wash the debris away, then keep the eye closed and seek medical attention. Do not apply any pressure to the eye. When any obvious injury to the eyes occurs, you must seek appropriate medical attention urgently.