

Handling Eye Injuries

“You’re gonna shoot your eye out!”

Written by Susan Rubin, Davis Vision Staff Writer

We’ve heard it before. Movies have made the line a popular joke, but in reality, eye injuries are no laughing matter. The simplest scratch can cause serious and permanent vision loss, even blindness. In the United States alone, it is estimated that 2.4 million eye injuries occur each year resulting in nearly one million people suffering from loss of sight.¹

Whether an injury is suffered at the workplace, playing sports or from doing projects around the home, it is extremely important to be able to recognize an eye injury when it happens. If you have or witness a person with the following, medical attention should be sought immediately:

- Pain or difficulty seeing
- The pupil is of an unusual size or shape
- A cut or torn eyelid
- Blood is evident in the eye
- One eye moves differently or not as well as the other
- An object is in the eye or under the lid and is not easily removable.
- One eye protrudes more than the other

There are a multitude of scenarios in which eye injuries may occur. A great way to reduce damage is to know the proper first aid steps to take in

between the time when the injury is inflicted and when you see an eye care professional.

If you or a person has some sort of **speck or particle in the eye**, do not rub the eye. The eye should be thoroughly flushed out with water to wash away the particle. If the irritation and redness do not subside, you should call your eye doctor.

What should you do if there is a **cut, puncture or foreign object** in the eye? Again, it is imperative not to rub the eye. You should also not make any attempts to remove any objects lodged in your eye. And most importantly, seek medical attention right away.

Chemical burns are particularly dangerous. Open the eye as wide as possible and using any drinkable water, begin flushing the eye out and get medical care right away. The eye should be opened as wide as possible and be flushed for at least fifteen minutes. If the burn was caused by a caustic or basic solution, the eye should continue to be flushed while on the way to your doctor or emergency room.

A **blow to the eye** can be treated with a cold compress that is applied gently, but without pressure to the eye. If the compress doesn’t do the job of relieving the pain, call your doctor. More importantly, if you are having trouble seeing or there is bleeding or discoloration of the eye, head to your eye doctor immediately.

So while the “You’re gonna shoot your eye out!” line is pretty funny onscreen, it isn’t quite as humorous when an accident really happens. It is important to know what to do when emergencies pop up. Remember, one of the best solutions to taking care of eye injury is avoiding them all together. About 90% of all injuries can be avoided simply by wearing the appropriate protective eyewear.

¹From Prevent Blindness America; “The Scope of the Eye Injury Problem” at PreventBlindness.org.

DAVISVISION®
SEE LIFE

800.328.4728 | www.davisvision.com