



Why Eye Safety Matters

Eye injuries can happen in seconds, but may cause permanent damage or blindness. Most workplace eye injuries are preventable when employees recognize hazards and wear the proper eye protection.

Common Causes of Eye Injuries

- Flying particles (metal, wood, concrete, dust)
- Chemical splashes
- Welding arcs and UV radiation
- Tools and equipment ejecting debris
- Impact from moving objects
- Exposure to harmful lights or lasers

Protecting Your Eyes

Wear the Correct Eye Protection

- Safety glasses for general work areas
 - Safety glasses with side shields where flying particles are present
 - Chemical splash goggles when handling chemicals
 - Face shields in addition to safety glasses or goggles when there is a risk of severe impact or splashing
 - Welding helmets and specialty lenses for welding and cutting operations
- Remember: A face shield alone is not a substitute for safety glasses.

Inspect Before Each Use

- Check lenses for scratches, cracks, or damage
- Ensure straps and side shields are secure
- Clean dirty lenses for clear vision
- Replace damaged PPE immediately

Safe Work Practices

- Keep work areas clean and free of debris.
- Use machine guards and shields as designed.
- Position yourself out of the line of fire when grinding, cutting, or using power tools.
- Never look directly at welding arcs or intense light sources.
- Follow chemical handling procedures and review Safety Data Sheets (SDSs).
- Report damaged equipment or unsafe conditions immediately.

What to do If an Eye Injury Occurs

For Particles in the Eye

- Do not rub the eye.
- Use an approved eyewash station if available.
- Seek medical attention if the object cannot be flushed out.

For Chemical Splashes

- Immediately flush the eye with clean water for at least 15 minutes.
- Hold eyelids open while flushing.
- If not using any eyewash station, ensure the contaminated eye is facing down.
- Seek emergency medical attention.

For Serious Injuries

- Do not attempt to remove embedded objects.
- Cover both eyes loosely to prevent movement.
- Get emergency medical assistance immediately.

Discussion Questions

1. What eye hazards are present in our work area today?
2. Are we wearing the correct eye protection for the tasks being performed?
3. Do all employees know the location of the nearest eyewash station?
4. Have any near-miss eye incidents occurred recently, and what can we learn from them?

Key Takeaway

Protect your eyes every time you work. The right eye protection, proper work practices, and immediate response to injuries can prevent lifelong vision loss. Remember: You only get one pair of eyes—protect them.

For more safety tips and courses, visit ndsc.org

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