

## Eye problems and injuries in Adolescents

Every year more than one million people get eye injuries, out of which ninety percent are preventable if safety eyewear is used. One hundred and twenty five thousand eye injury cases are caused by household products.

It is a good habit to wash hands regularly, especially after handling household chemicals. When using detergents and hazardous solvents, the handler must wear chemical safety goggles. Also, no children must be around while handling chemicals. While spraying, the nozzle must be turned away from the face. Fertilizers, pesticides and paints must be stored away from reach. While doing household activities proper protective gears such as goggles, gloves, boots and helmet should be worn, if required. The house must be illuminated adequately to avoid accidents in the dark. Stairs should also be illuminated and the rails must also be installed. The instructions for opening the tops of bottles must be read carefully to avoid them from popping and injuring other people. Children and adolescents should read instructions before handling operating equipment before playing games. All power equipment must be installed with guards. While playing outside, the eyes must be protected by UV protective goggles and it is a bad idea to look at the sun directly.

Precautions should not only be taken indoors, but outdoors too. This is because; more than forty thousand people get eye injuries outdoors. Ninety nine percent of the injuries are caused while playing sports. So it is necessary for the youngsters to wear protective eyewear while playing sports or when involved in outdoor recreational activities. A special helmet is designed with wire shield or polycarbonate face mask which is not only safe, but comfortable, too. Protective eyewear should also be worn while performing experiments in science lab. Fireworks must only be handled by adults.

Because of increasing use of computers, more and more youngsters are getting eye strains. The symptoms of eye strain caused by computer are red & watery eyes, focusing problems, aching & tired eyelids, eye muscle spasm, backache and headache. In such an environment, eye exercise must be done regularly. The eyes must be made to focus on distant objects and should be rotated from side to side. It is extremely important to give ample rest to the eyes. Glasses with UV shield must be worn when looking at the computer screen. Eye strain can be avoided by increasing the distance from the monitor.

Eye hazards are also caused when cosmetics are used improperly by contact lens wearers. Some of the adverse reactions are injury, eye irritation, allergy, dryness, infection, and lens deposition. That is the reason why adolescents must be made aware of the risk they will face when opting for contact lens. Girls

should understand that they should buy hypoallergenic cosmetics and especially the non-scented variety, manufactured by big brand names. Cosmetics should not be shared with anything else. The applicator brushes must be washed regularly and old mascara must be disposed and not refilled. Eye shadows which are glittery, pearlized, frosted or iridescent contain ground tinsel or oyster shell, which should be always avoided. Eyeliner should not be applied in the inner lid edge. Loose powder should be avoided. Cream should not be applied near the eyes. The wearer should wash hands while handling contact lens. No crying, washing of face or bathing should be done with the contact lens on.

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Word Count 564