

living with vision loss in one eye

From childhood through middle adult life, eye injuries are the leading cause of acquired vision loss.

In later adult life, age-related changes such as glaucoma, diabetes and macular degeneration become the leading cause of blindness. Once vision is permanently impaired in one eye, preserving vision in your remaining functioning eye becomes extremely important. You must take steps to protect vision in your functioning eye, because loss of vision in that eye will drastically change your lifestyle. Some possible consequences are:

- reading difficulty;
- loss of job;
- social impairments;
- limited driver's license;
- loss of recreational abilities;
- legal or total blindness.

IMPORTANCE OF EYE PROTECTION

Protection of your functioning eye is very important. At any age, proper eye protection should be worn at all times — during work (at your job and at home, especially when mowing the lawn), play, sports or hobbies. Children especially should be taught the importance of protecting their functioning eye and avoiding unnecessary risks.

For everyday protection, you should wear impact-resistant spectacles with sturdy, non-breakable frames.

Polycarbonate lenses are recommended because they are the strongest and most durable



Protective eyewear

(though still not 100 percent shatterproof). Impact-resistant eyeglasses can be made in many attractive styles.

Protective eyewear should be worn for the remainder of your life, even if no prescription is necessary for the correction of vision. Contact lenses alone are inadequate because they do not offer enough protection from injury.

SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Protective eyewear must always be worn during sports activities. While the risk of eye injuries does vary with the type of sports activity, comparing “contact” and “non-contact” sports offers little guidance regarding eye safety. Racquetball, for example, is considered a non-contact sport even though the risk to the eyes is very high.

Participating in sports requires full understanding of the risks involved and the proper eye protection needed. For a young child, parents must participate in making such decisions.



living with vision loss in one eye

Examples of high-risk sports to avoid are:

- boxing;
- wrestling;
- full contact martial arts;
- sports with high velocity objects (tennis, racquetball, baseball, etc.).

WORK AND RECREATION

Many work and recreational activities carry a risk of eye injury. Even simple, everyday items such as pencils or rubber bands can be threats to your eyes. For maximum protection of your vision, always wear protective eyewear. Industrial safety glasses, face shields or even special goggles are necessary for some activities. In addition, proper eyewear and a seatbelt should always be worn while driving in case of an accident.

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY EYE

Protection from eye injury is not the only step needed to preserve vision. You should also schedule regular eye examinations with your ophthalmologist (Eye M.D.) to monitor vision and health in your functioning eye. If found and treated early, many eye diseases have little impact on your vision. By taking adequate steps to protect and monitor your vision, you can maintain an active lifestyle.

COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR OPHTHALMOLOGIST:

Academy reviewed 10/09 057197 ISBN 978-1-61525-080-6

© 2009 American Academy of Ophthalmology. The American Academy of Ophthalmology, The Eye M.D. Association and the Academy logo are registered trademarks of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.