

# Sport



**Hindsight doesn't work if you lose your sight. Wear eye protection and keep your sight for life!**



### **The facts on sports related eye injuries:**

- ⇒ Approximately 40,000 sports eye injuries occur every year, many resulting in permanent vision loss.
- ⇒ Injuries range from abrasions of the cornea to bruises of the eyelids to internal eye injuries, such as retinal detachments and internal bleeding. Some of these lead to vision loss and permanent blindness.
- ⇒ Prevention is the most effective treatment. About 90 % of sports related eye injuries are preventable if the right protective eyewear is worn.
- ⇒ For young athletes, baseball and basketball account for the largest number of injuries.
- ⇒ Most sports related eye injuries are due to ocular contact with the ball.
- ⇒ Little league pitches may throw the ball up to 70 mph: fast enough to break bones and do serious damage to the eye.
- ⇒ Most protective eyewear, including goggles, face shields and guards, should be made of polycarbonate plastic and recommended specifically for your sport to provide the best protection.
- ⇒ Regular street glasses, contacts and industrial safety eyewear do not offer enough protection for sport.
- ⇒ Many celebrity athletes agree that eye protection is important and use protective eyewear themselves.
- ⇒ There's no evidence that wearing eye protection hampers athletic performance. In fact many famous athletes have excelled in their respective sports while wearing protective eyewear, such as NBA All -Star Kareem Abdul -Jabbar and NFL Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson.

## Eye Care for You

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- ⇒ Some high risk sports include basketball, baseball, hockey, football, lacrosse, racquetball and soccer
- ⇒ Baseball accounts for the largest number of eye injuries in children ages 5-14, at about 21%, while basketball is responsible for 32 % of eye injuries in 15 - 24 year olds. Racquet sports account for 29 % of sports related eye injuries in 24 - 64 year olds.
- ⇒ In baseball, most eye injuries are due to ocular contact with the ball. Batters are the most common victims; however pitchers and fielders can also be injured.
- ⇒ In basketball most eye injuries are due to eyes being poked by fingers and elbows. This contact can't be prevented, but you can prevent the serious eye injuries they cause by wearing protective eyewear.
- ⇒ In Canada, ocular trauma decreased by 90% after certified protective eyewear and headgear was made mandatory in organized amateur hockey.
- ⇒ NFL facemasks are specially contoured according to the position in which they fit on the face to prevent eye injuries.
- ⇒ Paintball has become a popular sport worldwide, but has been associated with devastating eye injuries, including blindness.

# Eye Care for You

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⇒ In 1993, the Dixie Youth Baseball team mandated the use of polycarbonate face shields for all runners and batters. The coaches of the Dixie Youth Baseball Team, which includes little league players in the South and Southwest, agree the safety shields have **NOT** hindered the performance of the players when batting or catching. Since the rule was enforced, no significant eye or face injuries have occurred while wearing the protective gear.

## **Tips to help prevent Sports Related Eye Injuries**

- Parents must insist that their children wear appropriate eye protection during sports activities and wear eye protection themselves when playing sports to set a positive example.
- Adults and children participating in high-risk sports should always wear appropriate sport-specific protective eyewear.
- Protective eyewear lenses should be made of polycarbonate material, a material ten times more impact resistant than other plastics. It can withstand the force of a .22 caliber bullet. Polycarbonate material offers the best protection against many sports-related eye injuries.
- Do not wear contact lenses, ordinary street wear glasses or industrial safety eyewear as a substitute for protective eyewear. Contact lenses, ordinary glasses and industrial safety eyewear offer no protection against eye injuries in sports activities.

# Eye Care for You

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- Make sure your sports protection eyewear fits properly. Your eyewear can be properly fitted by your eye MD (Ophthalmologist)
- Wear sports protective eyewear every time you play! Please make sure your kids do too.
- If you do sustain an eye injury, don't try to treat it yourself. Go to your local emergency room or call your Ophthalmologist immediately.

## **Safety Tips for Adults and Children with Good Vision in Only One Eye or History of Eye Injury.**

- Functionally one-eyed athletes (those who's best corrected visual acuity is worse than 20/40 in the poorer seeing eye) or those who have had previous surgery should never participate in boxing or full contact martial arts.
- For sports in which a facemask or helmet with eye protector is required, functionally one-eyed athletes should also wear sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses to ensure adequate protection. The helmet must fit properly and have a chinstrap.

For more information on manufactures that offer eye protection, please visit the Protective Eyewear Certification Council at [www.protecteyes.org](http://www.protecteyes.org)

## **Sport—Eye Protection**

All athletes should wear protective eyewear, but not just any eyewear. Use protection specifically designed for the sport.

Baseball—Polycarbonate or wire face guard attached to helmet; sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses on the field.

Basketball—sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses.

Field Hockey—Full face mask for the goalie; sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses/wire mesh goggles on the field.

Football—polycarbonate eye shield attached to helmet with wire face mask.

Ice Hockey—helmet with full face protection.

Men's lacrosse—helmet with full face protection.

Women's lacrosse—Full face protection or sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses/wire mesh goggles.

Paintball—full face protection.

Racquet sports—sports goggles with polycarbonate lenses.

Skiing—high impact resistant eye protector.

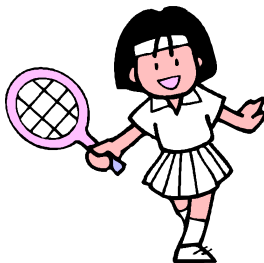
# Eye Care for You

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There is no satisfactory eye protection for boxing.

For sports with no standard, eyewear certified for racquet sports are suggested.

Today's athlete has a number of eye protectors available, and the best part is that protective eyewear does not hinder performance in any way. When properly fitted, appropriate eye protection can reduce the risk of eye injuries by 90%. Ask your Ophthalmologist to help you select the eyewear you need to play hard and play safe.



# Eye Care for You

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