

Workplace Eye Safety

Why is eye safety at work important?

Eye injuries in the workplace are very common. More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work each day. About 1 in 10 injuries require one or more missed workdays to recover from them. Of the total amount of work-related injuries, 10-20% will cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

Experts believe that the right eye protection could have lessened the severity or even prevented 90% of eye injuries in accidents.

What are the common causes of eye injuries?

Common causes for eye injuries are:

- Flying objects (bits of metal, glass)
- Tools
- Particles
- Chemicals
- Harmful radiation
- Any combination of these or other hazards

What is my best defense against an eye injury?

There are three things you can do to help prevent an eye injury:

- Know the eye safety dangers at work—complete an eye injury hazard assessment
- Eliminate hazards before starting work
- Use proper eye protection.

When should I protect my eyes at work?

Anytime you work in or pass through areas that pose hazards.

Computers and Your Eyes

Can looking at a computer screen damage my eyes?

No. While complaints of eye fatigue and discomfort are common among computer users, these symptoms are not caused by the computer screen itself. Computer screens give off little or no harmful radiation (such as x-rays or UV rays). All levels of radiation from computer screens are below levels that can cause eye damage such as cataracts.

Can looking at a computer screen cause eyestrain?

Fatigue, dry eyes, bad lighting or how you sit in front of the computer can cause eyestrain. Symptoms of eyestrain include sore or irritated eyes and difficulty focusing. You may also have symptoms of eyestrain if you need glasses or a change in your glasses.

What can I do to prevent eyestrain?

You can help prevent eyestrain by making changes to your computer workspace and by visiting your eye doctor. Here are a few suggestions on how to make your workspace more comfortable:

- Place your screen 20 to 26 inches away from your eyes and a little bit below eye level.
- Use a document holder placed next to your computer screen. IT should be close enough to you so you don't have to swing your head back and forth.
- Change the lighting to lower glare and harsh reflections.