

TOOLBOX TALK #11

TREATING EYE INJURIES

Eye injuries on the job are not uncommon. In 2012, 20,300 eye injuries involving days away from work occurred, according to the National Safety Council chart book, “Injury Facts”. What can workers do to help reduce this number?

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), “the most important thing you can do to protect your vision at work is to always wear appropriate protective eyewear, which can prevent more than 90 percent of serious eye injuries.”

AAO recommends the following treatment options for eye injuries.

For cuts or punctures:

- Place a shield over the affected eye, such as the bottom of a paper cup.
- Refrain from rinsing the injury with water, removing the impaled object, and rubbing or applying pressure to the injured eye.
- Do not take non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin. They can thin the blood and may increase bleeding.
- Seek emergency medical attention right away

For a foreign material stuck in an eye:

- Avoid rubbing the eye.
- Lift the upper eyelid of the injured eye and blink repeatedly to allow tears to flush out the particle.
- Seek medical attention if the particle does not come out.



For chemical burns:

- Flush the eye with clean water and seek medical care.

For blows to the eye:

- Apply a cold compress to reduce pain and swelling, but be careful not to apply pressure.
- Visit an eye doctor or emergency department if pain or visual disturbances occur.