

EYE-Q

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Eye Safety in the Home

April is named National Home Eye Health Month to help bring attention to the dangers to our vision that exist in our everyday lives. I will help point out to you some of the simple things you can do to help protect your family's sight without drastically changing the way you live.

Believe it or not, the average home is full of dangers that often go unnoticed. In fact, accidents involving common household products cause 125,000 eye injuries each year. Ninety percent of these eye injuries can be prevented through understanding, safety practices and the use of proper eye protection. You can reduce the risks of eye injuries for yourself and other family members by using this simple checklist for different areas of your home:

Indoor Safety

- Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Provide lights and handrails to improve safety on stairs.
- Pad or cushion sharp corners and edges of furnishing and home fixtures.
- Install cabinet and drawer locks in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Store personal-use items (cosmetics, toiletry products), kitchen utensils, and desk supplies where they are out of reach for children.

Outdoor Safety

- Inspect and remove debris from lawns before mowing.
- Keep paints, pesticides, fertilizers, and similar products properly stored in a secure area.
- Keep your tools in good condition; damaged tools should be repaired or replaced.
- Wear safety glasses or dust goggles to protect against flying particles, and chemical goggles to guard against exposure to fertilizers and pesticides.

Chemical Safety

- Wear chemical safety goggles when using hazardous solvents and detergents.
- Read and follow all manufacturer instructions and warning labels.

- Do not mix cleaning agents.
- Know that regular eyeglasses don't always provide enough protection.

Kids' Safety

- Avoid toys with sharp or rigid points, shafts, spikes, rods, and dangerous edges.
- Keep toys intended for older children away from younger children.
- Avoid flying toys and projectile-firing toys; these pose a danger to all children, particularly those under five years old.
- Be aware of items in playgrounds and play areas that pose potential eye hazards.
- Keep BB guns away from kids.
- Use occupant restraints such as infant and child safety seats, booster seats, safety belts, and shoulder harnesses in cars.

The next few weeks I will discuss many of these issues in more detail to help you develop sight saving safety programs for your own home.

If you have questions about your eye health e-mail Dr. Barowsky at doctom@tdkj.com and we'll try to answer your questions here at Eye-Q.