

News Release

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Basketball, Baseball and Air/Paintball Guns Top the List of Leading Causes of Eye Injuries

Bedminster Eye and Laser Center and the American Academy of Ophthalmology offer guidance on how to protect sight during Sports Eye Safety Month in April

Bedminster, NJ – 04/10/2019 – More than 40 percent of eye injuries that occur every year are related to sports or recreational activities. A recent study found that about 30,000 people in the U.S. went to an emergency department with a sports-related eye injury, a substantially higher estimate than previously reported.¹ Three sports accounted for almost half of all injuries: basketball, baseball and air/paintball guns.

Basketball was the leading cause of injury in males, followed by baseball/softball, and air/paintball guns. Baseball or softball was the leading cause among females, followed by cycling and soccer. In support of Sports Eye Safety Month in April, Bedminster Eye and Laser Center and the American Academy of Ophthalmology are offering athletes of all ages guidance on how to protect their eyes.

Sports-related injuries can range from corneal abrasions and bruises on the lids to more serious, vision-threatening internal injuries, such as a retinal detachment and internal bleeding. About one-third of sports related eye injuries happen to kids.

The good news is that simply wearing protective eyewear can prevent about 90 percent of eye injuries. Follow these tips to save your vision:

- **Wear the right eye protection:** For basketball, racquet sports, soccer and field hockey, wear protection with shatterproof polycarbonate lenses.
- **Put your helmet on:** For baseball, ice hockey and lacrosse, wear a helmet with a polycarbonate face mask or wire shield.
- **Know the standards:** Choose eye protection that meets American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards. See the Academy's protective eye-wear webpage for more details.
- **Throw out old gear:** Eye protection should be replaced when damaged or yellowed with age. Wear and tear may cause them to become weak and lose effectiveness.
- **Glasses won't cut it:** Regular prescription glasses may shatter when hit by flying objects. If you wear glasses, try sports goggles on top to protect your eyes and your frames.

“Virtually all sports eye injuries could be prevented by wearing proper eye protection,” said ophthalmologist Dianna L. Seldomridge, M.D., clinical spokesperson for the Academy. “That’s why I always strongly encourage athletes to protect their eyes when participating in competitive sports.”

Anyone who experiences a sports eye injury should immediately visit an ophthalmologist, a physician specializing in medical and surgical eye care.

For more information on sports eye safety, see the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeSmart® website at www.eyesmart.org.

About Bedminster Eye and Laser Center

Since 1988, Bedminster Eye & Laser Center has been synonymous with high quality vision care in Bedminster and beyond. At Bedminster Eye & Laser Center we're proud to offer you the finest in eyecare. Our highly trained clinical team [including an ophthalmologist, optometrist and certified ophthalmic technicians] provide a full range of eye care; from comprehensive eye exams to the latest in diagnostic testing, medical treatments and surgical procedures.

We also offer vision care that includes prescriptions for eyeglasses and/or contact lenses. Our devoted team of experts are skilled in all aspects of ophthalmology and take pride in offering our patients the highest quality and most personalized care. Our highly trained staff offer the experience and reputation you can trust.

About the American Academy of Ophthalmology

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world's largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, we protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for our patients and the public. We innovate to advance our profession and to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality eye care. Our EyeSmart® program provides the public with the most trusted information about eye health. For more information, visit www.aao.org.