

# Eye On Safety

## Watch Your Eyes When Playing Sports

(NAPSA)—While the American Academy of Ophthalmology reports that 40,000 people suffer from eye injuries related to sports every year, the good news is you don't have to be among them. It helps if you wear appropriate, sport-specific protective eyewear properly fitted by an eye care professional. Lenses made from polycarbonate materials provide the highest level of impact protection; they can withstand a ball or other projectile traveling at 90 miles per hour.

### Doctor's Advice

"It's absolutely necessary for athletes to use protective eyewear because eye injuries can be devastating," said glaucoma specialist Dr. Ruth Williams. "Unfortunately, many athletes feel they don't need protective eyewear or that injuries are uncommon."

In addition to abrasions of the cornea and bruises of the lids, sports injuries can include retinal detachments and internal bleeding. The most serious risks involve permanent vision loss along with infection. In addition, people who have sustained eye injuries are at greater risk for developing glaucoma.

Many sports create risk for eye injuries; however, protection is available for most sports, including basketball, baseball, hockey, football, lacrosse, fencing, paintball, water polo, golf and many others. "Wearing properly fitted protective eyewear will not harm your performance in a game, and it may well save your sight," said Dr. Williams.

### Pointers For Parents

Most sporting leagues don't require children to wear eye protection, so parents should take special care to ensure that their



**Protective goggles can help you see your way clear to enjoying sports safely.**

children wear eye protection. "Parents can spare their children needless injury and pain by having them wear protective eyewear," said Dr. Williams.

### When To Get Help

In the event of an eye injury, it is important to seek medical help immediately. Even a seemingly light blow can cause a serious eye injury. If a black eye, pain or visual problem occurs after a blow, contact your Eye M.D. or seek emergency medical help at once.

### About the American Academy of Ophthalmology

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world's largest association of eye physicians and surgeons—Eye M.D.s—with more than 27,000 members worldwide. Eye health care is provided by the three "Os"—opticians, optometrists and ophthalmologists. It is the ophthalmologist, or Eye M.D., who can treat it all—eye diseases and injuries—and perform eye surgery.

### More Information

Learn about eye diseases, your risk factors and the names of eye M.D.s nearby at [www.GetEyeSmart.org](http://www.GetEyeSmart.org) or [www.aao.org](http://www.aao.org).