

Eye on Health

Looking At Ways To Protect Eyes

(NAPSA)—Taking a look at the nature of eye injuries could help prevent them. That's the idea behind a study that takes a one-week "snapshot" of eye health in the U.S.

Ophthalmologists and other doctors participating in the study reported treating nearly 1,000 eye injuries during the week—88 percent of which were accidental.

Most injuries occurred at home and nearly 70 percent of those injured were not wearing protective eyewear while doing certain tasks. Most of the doctors felt that the injuries could have been avoided if eyewear had been worn, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The number of eye injuries from assaults dropped nearly 35 percent from a similar snapshot in 2004.

The Eye Injury Snapshot is an annual study that identifies the nature of eye injuries. In the spring of 2005, participating doctors from across the country, including ophthalmologists and emergency, pediatric and family physicians, submitted anonymous reports of eye injuries they treated over the course of a week.

"The study demonstrates the incredible scope of eye trauma in this country, occurring without respect to age, gender or region of the country," said Paul Sternberg Jr., MD, Academy secretary for communications. "A large percentage of these injuries are preventable, either by avoiding activities that could lead to injury or by wearing protective eyewear."



Look Out—A survey found people of all ages should protect their eyes from injury.

Sternberg's group is the world's largest association of eye physicians and surgeons (Eye M.D.s).

Survey Results

- **Looking At Age**—More than half of the patients treated were between the ages of 18 and 45, and almost 30 percent of those patients were between 30 and 40 years old.

- **Keep An Eye On Your Home**—Most of the injuries happened in the home (42 percent) and occurred in the afternoon. Nearly half of the time (47 percent) injuries occurred between noon and 6 p.m.

- **Eye-Opening Causes**—Some of the most unusual injury-causing instruments included a cookie, a green peach, a rooster beak and a moose (the patient was involved in a car crash with a moose).

"Fortunately, our nation's ophthalmologists have the skill and training to treat most of these patients and minimize the amount of permanent vision loss," Dr. Sternberg added.

To find an Eye M.D., visit www.aao.org.