

## APRIL: SPORTS EYE SAFETY MONTH

### Play Hard ... Play Safe

The long-term health benefits of sports are clear: they provide good exercise for maintaining proper weight, improve strength and coordination, and help build lifelong healthy habits and social skills. For more than 40,000 people each year, there are health risks in playing sports including eye injuries; the vast majority of which are preventable.

Injuries range from corneal abrasions, eyelid bruises, and internal eye injuries, such as retinal detachments and internal bleeding. Many of these injuries lead to vision loss and permanent blindness.

The thousands of eye injuries each year aren't only from basketball, baseball, football and hockey – paintball, soccer, tennis, golf and even water sports can also be dangerous to the eyes.

Fortunately, specific protective eyewear is available for just about all activities, allowing today's athletes to choose from various types of sturdy, lightweight and effective eyewear that's appropriate for their sport. Regular street glasses and contacts do not offer enough protection for sports. When properly fitted, eyewear does not hinder performance and can prevent 90 percent of sports eye injuries.

When participating in sports, be sure to wear protective eyewear that is:

- Appropriate for the sport;
- Has polycarbonate lenses or shields;
- Is properly fitted by an eye care professional.

If you play sports, you can get hurt. Whatever your game, whatever your age, you need to protect your eyes. See your eye care professional today for appropriate protective eyewear.

### Sports are the leading cause of eye injuries in children.

- For young athletes, baseball and basketball account for the largest number of injuries.
- Little League pitchers may throw the ball **up to 70 mph** - fast enough to break bones and seriously injure the eye.
- In basketball, you can't prevent contact with flying elbows and fingers, but the serious eye injuries they can cause can be prevented by wearing appropriate protective eyewear.
- Many other popular sports, such as tennis, soccer, football, golf, water sports and hockey, also put unprotected players at risk for serious eye injury.

**Please call 703-827-5454 or 877-234-2020 to make an appointment with one of our doctors.**

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Richmond, VA Washington, DC Baltimore, MD

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#### According to the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH):

- Every 13 minutes an emergency room in the United States treats a sports-related eye injury.
- The following are risk ratings for individual sports:
  - o High risk of eye injury: air rifle, BB gun, baseball, basketball, boxing, cricket, fencing, hockey, lacrosse, full-contact martial arts, paintball, racquetball, softball, squash.
  - o Moderate risk of eye injury: badminton, fishing, football, golf, soccer, tennis, volleyball.
  - o Low risk of eye injury: bicycling, diving, non-contact martial arts, skiing (snow and water), swimming, wrestling.
  - o Eye safe: track & field, gymnastics.

#### **Stay Protected.** *It's up to parents to ensure their children wear eye protection when they play sports.*

Many children's sports leagues, schools and teams don't require children to wear eye protection. Parents must insist that children wear eye protection every time they play and set a good example by wearing eye protection themselves whenever they play. There's no evidence that wearing eye protection hampers athletic performance. Many famous athletes, including NBA All-Star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and NFL Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson, have excelled in their respective sports while wearing protective eyewear.

**See Clearly Vision and Cornea Consultants** include multiple medical practices that have served patients in the mid-Atlantic region for over ten years. We offer patients the following services:

- Advanced Cataract Surgery, including specialty lens implants
- All Laser LASIK/Custom LASIK, LASEK, PRK and CK
- Annual Eye Exams
- Botox, Juvéderm, Latisse, and NEOCUTIS (available only through a physician)
- Contact Lenses - cosmetic and therapeutic fitting, including keratoconus
- Corneal Transplants
- Diabetes and Glaucoma Management
- Dry Eye Treatment
- Emergency On-Call Care

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