

Kids, Sports, and Protective Glasses

The American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Ophthalmology recently issued a policy statement strongly recommending the use of protective eyewear for anyone participating in sports where eye injuries can occur.

Some of the sports identified as having a high risk of eye injury include basketball, baseball, softball, lacrosse, field and ice hockey, and racquetball. Some moderate risk sports include tennis, soccer, volleyball, football, golf, badminton, and water polo.

The risk of significant eye injury can be reduced by at least 90% when players are fitted with appropriate eye protectors. The Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness, along with the Eye Health and Public Information Task Force, provides the following guidelines for evaluating protective eyewear:

Only two types of eyewear are satisfactory for eye injury risk sports:

- Safety sports eyewear that meets ASTM Standard F803 for selected sports (racket sports, baseball fielders, basketball, women's lacrosse, and field hockey).
- Safety sports eyewear that meets ASTM Standard F910. This standard exceeds ASTM F803, and is used for some positions, such as baseball batters and base runners, that require additional eye protection.

Two types of eyewear that are not satisfactory for eye-injury risk sports include:

- Fashion eyewear that meets ANSI Standard Z80.3.
- Industrial safety eyewear that meets ANSI Standard Z87.1.

Make protective eyewear mandatory for athletes who see out of only one eye and for athletes whose ophthalmologists recommend eye protection after eye surgery or trauma.

Athletes should replace sports eye protectors that are damaged or yellowed with age because they may not offer adequate protection. When selecting appropriate eyewear, athletes should check with an experienced ophthalmologist, optometrist, optician, physician, or athletic trainer.

If you have a safety or risk management question or a suggestion for a topic, please contact Markel's Risk Management Department at safety1st@markelcorp.com.