

LIVING WITH ONE GOOD EYE

After loss of vision in one eye a person can still live a full productive life at whatever age the loss occurs. Children growing up with only one good eye never know the difference, develop, and learn along with their age groups. Older children or adults who suddenly lose vision in one eye will go through a re-adjustment period but they generally continue to lead a personally satisfying and active lifestyle.

Vision Loss

From childhood through middle adult life, eye injuries are the leading cause of vision loss. Later adult life, age-related changes such as glaucoma and diabetes becomes the leading cause of blindness. Once vision is irreversibly impaired in one eye, taking care of the remaining good eye becomes extremely important. All possible protective measures should be taken to preserve the vision in the good eye. Any loss of vision in the remaining good eye may cause:

- Difficulty reading
- Loss of job
- Loss of driver's License (acuity less than 6/12)
- Loss of recreational skills
- Total Blindness

Eye protection

Protection of the good eye cannot be stressed enough.

At any age appropriate eye protection should be worn at all times during work, play and in sports or hobby activities. Children especially should be taught the importance of protecting their eyes and avoiding unnecessary risks.

For everyday protection, impact-resistant spectacles with sturdy frames are sufficient. Polycarbonate lenses are recommended because they are a particularly strong material. Impact-resistant eyeglasses can be made in many pleasing styles.

Once they are needed, protective eyeglasses should be continued for the remainder of one's life, even if no prescription is necessary for the correction of vision. Contact lenses alone should not be used because they do not offer the same protection from injury and may even increase risk to the good eye.

Sports Participation

Young, active people are at a higher risk for eye accidents and sports injuries. Protective eye equipment should always be used for sports. While the risk of eye injuries does vary with the type of sports activities, comparing "contact" and "non-contacts" sports offers little guidance regarding eye safety. Squash or shuttle badminton, for example, is considered a "non-contact" sport although the risk to the eyes is high.

Sports participation should only be made with a full understanding of the risks involved and with the proper eye protection. For a young child, the parents must participate in making such decisions. Certain high-risk sports, such as boxing, should always be avoided.

Work and recreation

Many work and recreation activities carry risk of eye injuries. The appropriate eye protection should be worn. Loose objects such as pencils, sticks or particles thrown by tools can be a threat to the eye.

Industrial safety glasses, side shields or even special goggles may be necessary for some activities. As in sports, certain industrial or hobby activities (e.g. fireworks) may present such a high risk to the eyes that the person with one "good" eye should avoid them.

While driving a car seat belts should always be worn so that the eyes are less likely to be bruised or cut in case of impact.

Maintain Healthy Eyes

The better or remaining eye does not "wear out" or "work harder," even though it provides most or all of a person's vision. Examinations by an ophthalmologist are even more important than for the normal sighted person.

Summary

An active and satisfying lifestyle is still possible for someone with good vision in only one eye. Proper eye protection, common sense and regular medical eye examinations are necessary to help ensure a full and productive life.

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