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213155 Work-related eye injuries in the U.S

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Background: Each day, nearly 2,000 U.S. workers have an eye injury that requires medical treatment. Characterizing these injuries aids the development of eye safety programs and the design of eye protection.

Methods: Two national injury surveillance systems collect data on workplace eye injuries. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Survey of Injuries and Illnesses captures data reported by private industry employers on medically-treated eye injuries involving a day or more away from work (DAFW). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's occupational supplement to the National Electronic Injury and Illness System (NEISS-Work) captures data on eye injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments. NEISS-Work data are based on worker reporting of work-relatedness at the time of treatment.

Results: Occupational eye injury rates have been declining. In 2007, there were 33,000 DAFW eye injuries (3% of all DAFW cases) at a rate of 3.5 injuries per 10,000 full-time workers (FTE) and 212,000 ED-treated occupational eye injuries (6% of all ED-treated cases) at a rate of 15 injuries per 10,000 FTE. Younger workers, males, and construction industry workers had the highest rates. Most injury events involved eye contact with an object such as scrap or debris or involved exposure to substances such as chemicals.

Conclusions: Reducing occupational eye injuries has been a national goal of the Healthy People 2010 vision initiative. Although eye injury rates have decreased, the eye injury etiology remains largely the same. Increased use of eye protection may significantly influence the injury rate and patterns.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the etiology of the most common occupational eye injuries 2. Identify the workers at the greatest risk of an eye injury 3. List two national injury surveillance systems for occupational eye injury data.

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: As the NIOSH Chief of the Injury Surveillance Team, I have studied occupational eye injury epidemiology for more than 12 years. I serve as the NIOSH representative to the ANSI Z87 Eye and Face Protection Committee and the Healthy People 2010 Workgroup.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

See more of: [Eye Injuries - Ounces of Prevention / Pounds of Cure](#) (jointly organized by the Vision Care and Injury Control and Emergency Health Services sections)

See more of: [Vision Care Section](#)

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