



FLORIDA EYE
Microsurgical Institute, Inc.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FLORIDA EYE OPHTHALMOLOGISTS TELL PATIENTS THE MOST ORDINARY THINGS CAN CAUSE THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY EYE INJURIES
PREVENTION IS THE KEY**

Boynton Beach, October 1, 2009.... When most people go out to mow the lawn, jump-start the car or get ready to do some spring cleaning, the last thing they think about is protecting their eyes, which is why more than one million people suffer from eye injuries each year. However, says Jason Gorscak, MD, a comprehensive care ophthalmologist with Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute in Boynton Beach. "90 percent of these eye injuries could have been prevented if the individual was wearing appropriate protective eyewear (with "ANSI Z87.1" marked on the lens or frame).

October is Eye Injury Prevention Month, and the doctors at Florida Eye are urging people to protect their eyes from the extraordinary damage often caused by the most ordinary of activities.

"I tell people to keep a pair of goggles in the trunk for when they need to jump-start their car," says Dr. Gorscak. "Battery acid sparks and debris flying from car batteries can severely damage the eyes."

A person doesn't have to be away from home to experience an eye injury, either. Many household chemicals, such as cleaning fluids, detergents and ammonia, are extremely hazardous and can burn the eye's delicate tissues. When using chemicals, Dr. Gorscak advises everyone to always read instructions and labels carefully, work in a well-ventilated area and make sure spray nozzles point away from you and others before spraying. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly after use.

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Dr. Gorscak suggests that before using a lawnmower, power trimmer or edger, check for debris. Stones, twigs and other items can become dangerous projectiles shooting from the blades of a lawnmower, potentially injuring your eyes or those of innocent bystanders.

"I also warn people about one of the most dangerous activities, in terms of eye injuries," adds Dr. Gorscak. "Each year hundreds of people end up with terrible eye injuries and burns from fireworks that are set off in the backyard. The majority of victims are bystanders and children. There's just no way to use fireworks at home safely, even sparklers because they burn at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt gold. I tell all my patients 'Go see a show put on by the pros - it's safer, cheaper and more spectacular.'"

Prevention is the first and most important step in avoiding serious eye injuries, so be sure to protect your eyes with appropriate protective eyewear.

The Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute offers a full range of comprehensive ophthalmologic care, including routine eye care and examinations, pediatric eye care, dry eyes, advanced corneal, retinal and cataract procedures, laser treatments, glaucoma and diabetic procedures, and various other sophisticated treatments. With its own pediatric wing and fully accredited outpatient surgical center in Boynton Beach, the Institute also has additional offices in Boca Raton, Wellington, and Juno Beach.

Also at Florida Eye with Dr. Gorscak is pediatric, ROP and adult strabismus specialist Dr. Lee Friedman, Dr. Randy Katz, the Institute's diabetic retinopathy, retinal and macular degeneration specialist, and Dr. Barry Schechter, who specializes in refractive cataract surgery, glaucoma and cornea and external disease. Dr. Jonathan Chua covers general ophthalmology and has, over the years seen literally thousands of patients in South Florida. For more information on the Institute, its physicians and current clinical trials, please contact Gwen Cohan at (561) 736-5050 and visit www.fleyedocs.com.

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Additional Information

Eye Injury Facts and Myths

...Provided by Florida Eye Microsurgical Institute & the American Academy of Ophthalmology

- Men are more likely to sustain an eye injury than women and most of those surveyed by the American Academy of Ophthalmology got this right.
- Perceptions were off on where most eye injuries occur, however. The persistent belief was that eye injuries are most common on the job and especially in the course of work at factories and construction sites. In fact, nearly half (44.7 percent) of all eye injuries reported during the fifth-annual Eye Injury Snapshot (conducted by the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Ocular Trauma) occurred in the home.
- More than 40 percent of the injuries reported were caused by projects and activities such as home repairs, yard work, cleaning and cooking. More than a third (34.2 percent) of injuries in the home occurred in living areas such as the kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, living or family room.
- More than 40 percent of eye injuries every year are related to sports or recreational activities.
- Eyes can be damaged by sun exposure, not just chemicals, dust or objects.
- Among all eye injuries reported in the Eye Injury Snapshot, more than 78 percent of people were not wearing eyewear at the time of injury. Of those reported to be wearing eyewear of some sort at the time of injury (including glasses or contact lenses), only 5.3 percent were wearing safety or sports spectacles.

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