

Eye Safety for Disasters



Bringing Americans to Eye Care

211 West Wacker Drive, Suite 1700
Chicago, Illinois 60606
800.331.2020
PreventBlindness.org

Prevent Blindness urges anyone affected by disaster and emergencies (e.g. hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, earthquakes, etc.) to think about their eye health and eye safety when preparing and cleaning up.

Plan for Your Eye Health

In your emergency preparedness kit, make sure to include an extra pair of glasses, and/or eye medication along with prescriptions for these items. For contact lens wearers, include an extra pair, along with lens solution, case and cleaner.

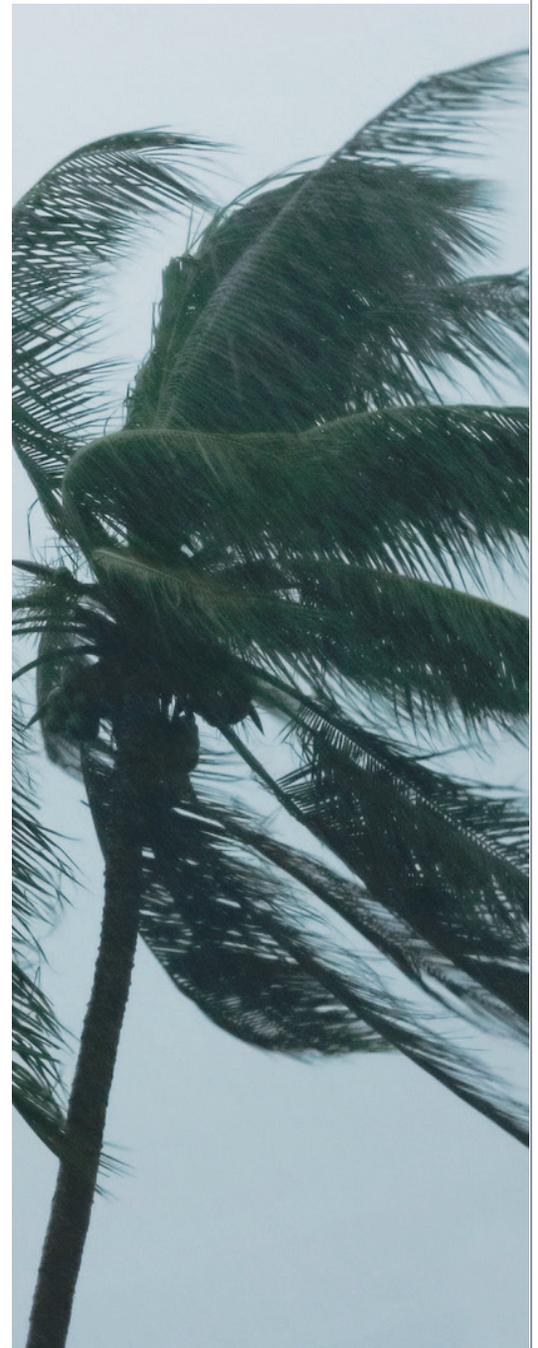
Ready.gov provides additional information on how to put together an emergency kit: www.ready.gov/build-a-kit.

Wear Proper Safety Eyewear

- You should always wear safety eyewear whenever there is any chance of an eye injury. Anyone working in or passing through areas that pose eye hazards should wear protective eyewear.
- When preparing for an emergency situation, such as a hurricane (e.g. boarding windows), wear safety eye glasses with side shields to protect from particles, flying objects or dust. Safety glasses will protect your eyes from flying objects.
- Wear eye goggles when cleaning up after a disaster if you think you may come into contact with hazardous chemicals. Goggles protect your eyes from chemical splashes.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers additional safety recommendations for disaster cleanup: www.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/facts.html.

Eye Care Assistance

If you are affected by a disaster and need assistance for vision and eye care services, refer to the Prevent Blindness Vision Care Financial Assistance Information for help: www.preventblindness.org/vision-care-financial-assistance-information.



Eye Safety for Disasters (Continued)

First Aid for Eye Emergencies

Be Prepared

- Wear eye protection for all hazardous activities and sports at school, home and on the job that could lead to an eye injury.
- **DO** stock a first aid kit with a rigid eye shield and commercial eyewash (make sure it is not expired) before engaging in activities where an eye injury could occur.
- **DO NOT** assume that any eye injury is harmless. When in doubt, see an eye doctor promptly.

Chemical Burns

In all cases of eye contact with chemicals:

- Immediately flush the eye with water or any other drinkable liquid. Hold the eye under a faucet, shower or pour water into the eye using a clean container. Keep the eye open as wide as possible during flushing. Continue flushing for at least 15 minutes.
- If a contact lens is in the eye, begin flushing over the lens immediately. Flushing may dislodge the lens.
- **DO NOT** bandage the eye.
- Seek emergency medical care promptly after flushing.

Specks in the Eye

- **DO NOT** rub the eye.
- Try to let tears wash the speck out or use a commercial eyewash.
- Try lifting upper eyelid outward. Look down over the lower lid.
- **DO NOT** use tweezers or other items to try and remove the speck.
- If the speck doesn't wash out, see an eye doctor immediately.

Blows to the Eye

- Apply cold compress without pressure.
- Seek emergency medical care in cases of pain, blurry vision, one eye sticks out more than the other, blood inside the eye, or discoloration (black eye), which could mean internal eye damage.

Cuts and Punctures of Eye and Eyelid

- **DO NOT** wash out eye with water or any other liquid.
- **DO NOT** try to remove an object that is stuck in the eye.
- Cover the eye with a rigid shield or the bottom half of a paper cup without pressure. Secure the shield or cup to the brow above the eye and the cheekbone below the eye without putting pressure on the eye.
- Seek emergency medical care immediately.