

Facts About Fireworks Injuries

Prevent Blindness wants all Americans to know the dangers of consumer fireworks. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports the following fireworks injury statistics:

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- > Fireworks devices were involved in an estimated 11,900 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2015 (the latest year for which data is available).
- > An estimated 8,000 injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms during the one-month period (June 19–July 19) surrounding the Fourth of July.
- > 16 percent, or 1,300, of those injuries were to the eyes.
- > Sparklers accounted for 1,900 injuries, firecrackers for 1,200 injuries.
- > Males accounted for 61% of fireworks injuries.
- > 26% of fireworks injuries were to children under age 15.
- > Young adults 15 to 19 years of age had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated, fireworks-related injuries.
- > For children under 5 years old, sparklers accounted for the most estimated injuries for that specific age group.
- > Data from the U.S. Eye Injury Registry shows that bystanders are more often injured by fireworks than operators themselves.
- > Contusions, lacerations and foreign bodies were the most common injuries to eyes.
- > There were 11 fireworks-related deaths in 2015.



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Facts About Fireworks Injuries—Continued

Keep These Fireworks-Related Injuries in Mind

- > An 11-year-old female was in a pool and people were setting off fireworks. When the victim was getting out of the pool, an unspecified firework shot directly at her and struck her in the right eye. The victim sustained retinal damage from blunt force trauma. The victim lost vision in her right eye.
- > A 70-year-old male sat on a picnic table in a garage at his friend's house. His friend's fiancé dropped three aerial mortars into a cannon and ignited the fireworks at the end of the driveway. The victim thought that one of the mortars was put in upside down. The fireworks caught fire, exploded and shot sideways in different directions. The victim was the only person present who could not get out of the way. The fireworks exploded near the victim's eye, and the victim sustained a laceration and his eye was full of blood.
- > A 22-year-old male ignited the first tube of a multiple tube device type firework on the street. The firework exploded right away. The ashes went into the victim's eyes and caused abrasions in both his eyes.
- > A 24-year-old female was at a public display of fireworks. There was a slight breeze and it was more prevalent higher in the air. The victim stared straight up looking at fireworks in the evening sky, and she felt a fragment from fireworks get into her eye. The victim did not feel symptoms until the next day. The victim's eye was scratchy and painful.

Our Position: Protect Your Sight by Celebrating Safely

Prevent Blindness urges you to celebrate safely. Fireworks are extremely dangerous. Do not purchase, use or store fireworks of any type. Protect yourself, your family and your friends by avoiding fireworks. Attend only authorized public fireworks displays conducted by licensed operators, but be aware that even professional displays can be dangerous.

Call our toll-free hotline at **800.331.2020** to receive Safe Summer Celebrations. The booklet discusses the dangers of fireworks and offers safe alternatives. You can also request a copy of our ***Fireworks Eye Injury Safety Quiz***.

Prevent Blindness supports the development and enforcement of bans on the importation, sale and use of all fireworks, except those used in authorized public displays by licensed operators, as the only effective means of eliminating the social and economic impact of fireworks-related trauma and damage. For more on the Prevent Blindness position on fireworks, request a copy of our complete position statement.

Source: Tu, Yongling, 2015 Fireworks Annual Report: Fireworks-Related Deaths and Emergency Department-Treated Injuries, during 2015, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, June 2016. http://www.cpsc.gov/Global/Research-and-Statistics/Injury-Statistics/Fuel-Lighters-and-Fireworks/Fireworks_Report_2015FINALCLEARED.pdf

