

US man survives pruning shears in eye socket

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An 86-year-old American has made a stunning recovery after a gardening accident left him with a pair of pruning shears impaled through an eye socket deep into his skull.

Leroy Luetscher lost his balance and fell face-down on the shears, which had landed point-end down in the ground when he dropped them at his home in Green Valley, Arizona.

"It was excruciating. I just can't tell you how much it hurt. ..I thank my lucky stars that I'm here," he told a news conference at the University Medical Center in Tucson.

An X-ray released by the hospital shows the garden implement impaled through his right [eye](#), with the handle stuck 6 inches (15 cm) down inside his [skull](#).

But all that remains of the July 30 accident is some slight swelling of his upper and lower lids and minor double vision in the affected eye, said Dr. Lynn Polonski, one of the surgeons who operated on him.

"You just wonder how the handle of the pruning shears got there. The handle was actually resting on the external carotid artery in his neck," Polonski said.

"We decided we could safely remove the pruning shears. We are so happy that Mr. Luetscher did not lose his eye or any vital structures," said the doctor, a clinical assistant professor of ophthalmology.

[Trauma surgeon](#) Julie Wynne described how, after removing the shears, she and other doctors rebuilt the socket with metal mesh and saved the octogenarian's eye.

"You wouldnt believe your eyes ...Half of the pruning shears was sticking out and the other half was in his head," she said.

Luetscher's girlfriend Arpy Williams, who called 911 after the accident, said: "I was just shocked. There was blood all over ... I saw this instrument in his face, and I just said 'Leroy honey, what have you done?'"

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