

Children's eye injuries peak in summer, expert says

June 21 2013



Swimming pool accidents top the list.

(HealthDay)—Swimming pools are a major reason why children's eye injuries increase in the summer, according to an expert.

[Eye injuries](#) among youngsters start to rise in May and June before peaking in July. They then fall off in September after school begins, according to Gerald McGwin Jr., a professor in the epidemiology and ophthalmology departments at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"Overall, the leading cause of eye injury in children 15 and younger is sports, specifically swimming," he said in a university news release.

Pool chemicals, which can cause [eye irritation](#), are a common cause of

eye injuries.

"Ensuring that a pool's [pH level](#) is within normal range is one way to reduce these injuries," McGwin said. "Goggles and swim masks are another way by providing a barrier between eyes and water."

Other causes of pool-related eye injuries include being hit by water toys or by elbows and feet.

Household chemicals and cleaners are another cause for concern and account for 30 percent of eye injuries suffered by children younger than age 2. "The obvious solution for parents and caregivers is to keep dangerous chemicals and substances locked up or out of the reach of children at all times," McGwin said.

Other ways to reduce eye injuries include having children of all ages wear [eye protection](#) when playing sports and keeping children away from sparklers, firecrackers or any other types of fireworks.

The good news is that the number of eye injuries among children 15 and younger in the United States is declining, McGwin said. Reported eye injuries fell from a high of more than 80,000 in 1992 to a low of about 50,000 in 2010.

More information: The American Academy of Ophthalmology has more about the [prevention and care of eye injuries in children](#).

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Citation: Children's eye injuries peak in summer, expert says (2013, June 21) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-06-children-eye-injuries-peak-summer.html>

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