

AVOID SPORTS EYE INJURIES - WEAR PROPER PROTECTION

NEWS RELEASE

When it comes to sports eye injuries, there are no winners, especially since proper protection could prevent such injuries. Steven Silverstein, M.D. knows first hand the need for eye protection, and not just professionally.

"Years ago while playing racquetball, I sustained a serious injury to my eye because I wasn't wearing goggles," Doctor Silverstein says. He says that incident is one reason why he became an ophthalmologist and a strong proponent of wearing eye guards while participating in sports.

"There shouldn't even be an option," he says of requirements to wear eye guards in some sports. "It should be required like seat belts and child safety seats in cars. It's that important."

As an ophthalmologist, Doctor Silverstein treats the damage-facial fractures from errant baseball, blunt trauma contact sports, gun shot injuries. Optic nerve damage, ruptured globes, and retinal detachments all could result from a blow to the eye. "It can be horrible," Doctor Silverstein says. "Removing a damaged eye from a fifteen year old can take years off your life."

Statistics from the National Society to Prevent Blindness show nearly 40,000 victims of sports eye injuries each year, with almost half of those occurring in children. NSPB estimates a full 90 percent of those injuries could have been prevented by proper use of eye guards.

"Parents need to be aware of how to protect their child's vision as he or she participates in certain sports." Doctor Silverstein says. "Parents can then encourage coaches to require eye and face protection."