THE BASICS OF EYE PROTECTION

It is prudent to wear protective eyewear in a variety of potential exposure settings where workers may be at risk of acquiring infectious diseases via ocular exposure.

Why wear eye protection?

Eye protection, such as face shields, goggles and eye shields, help to protect your eyes from splashes, sprays, and infectious droplets.

What is eye protection (and what is not)?

Eyewear is designed to help to protect the eyes from all sides so fluids do not enter. Face shields, eye shields and goggles count as eye protection.

Regular eyeglasses and contact lenses are not eye protection.
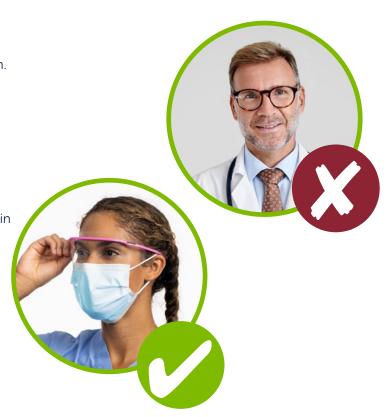
Who should wear eye protection?

All healthcare workers who are patient-facing should wear eye protection. Healthcare workers working in fluid-rich environments should also wear eye protection.

Where should eye protection be worn?

Eye protection should be worn during procedures where splashes or sprays are anticipated. While there are many known procedures where splashes or sprays may be generated there are also times where fluid may strike the face unexpectedly. Eyewear should also be worn at certain times when coming into contact with patients, whether in patient rooms, intake areas or procedure rooms.

HALYARD*
Eye Protection

How do I safely remove my eye protection?

- The front of your eye protection is considered contaminated. To remove face shields that wrap around the head, grasp from the back and remove carefully.

- To remove eyewear or eye shields, take them off as you would a pair of eyeglasses, using the side pieces and being careful not to touch the front.

- Perform hand hygiene after touching or removing your eye protection.

SOURCES

Scottish Infection Prevention and Control Programme (2020). Eye Protection. [Online]. Available at: https://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/media/1666/2020-02-sicp-lr-eyewear-v21.pdf (Accessed: April 2, 2024).

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. (2021). Infection prevention and control in healthcare settings – COVID-19: 5th update. Retrieved from https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Infection-prevention-and-control-in-healthcare-settings-COVID-19_5th_update.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, May 8). Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html. Updated May 8th, 2023
Accessed: March 15th, 2024.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Sequence for putting on personal protective equipment (PPE). Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/ppe-sequence.pdf. Accessed: March 15th, 2024.