

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS WHO ARE FUNCTIONALLY MONOCULAR

We are born with two eyes that see both straight ahead and to the sides; it is easy to take this wonderful miracle for granted. Some people suffer from eye disease or injury to one of their eyes. These people can still lead happy, normal and functional lives. Constantly present, however, is the threat of vision loss in the normal eye.

Consider that someone with only one eye is at 8 times greater risk of losing their only good eye than someone with two eyes is of losing one. Injuries can occur at anytime and are impossible to predict (i.e., ricocheting BB pellet, shattered glass, wire spit up from a lawn mower, or the corner of an open kitchen cabinet).

Many patients who consult us about their eye problems have had serious damage to their eye, causing visual loss. This visual loss may be a loss in visual acuity, a loss in peripheral vision, or both. We strongly believe that anyone who has significant visual loss in one eye should wear safety glasses at all times.

Safety lenses deflect projectiles without shattering. In the past, glass and plastic safety lenses were made thicker than standard lenses. Now the space-age plastic material called polycarbonate is the most impact resistant and lightest material in today's lens market. It's so strong that it doesn't have to be thicker to meet the highest impact resistance standards; however, if an individual is wearing these lenses in an industrial environment, then additional thickness might still be warranted. Safety frames and sport frames made of non-shatterable materials have an additional design feature that inhibits the lens from being pushed through the frame upon impact. Safety eyewear can be made in stylish frames – that do not look institutional!

There are some important steps you can take to protect yourself from further visual loss:

1. Wear your safety glasses at all times.
2. When participating in sports (i.e., racquetball) wear the appropriate protective sport eyewear.
3. Maintain annual appointments with your general eye doctor to make sure your good eye is healthy and that any problems are treated early.

If you would like more information about dealing with the loss of an eye, let us know. There are many resources available to you.

**TO BE EFFECTIVE, SAFETY GLASSES MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES**