

Occupational Eye Injury: The Neglected Role of Eye Protection

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Objective: To evaluate the role of eye protection in patients with an occupational eye injury.

Setting: Ophthalmology Department, King Hamad University Hospital, Bahrain.

Design: A Prospective Cross-Sectional Study.

Method: All patients who presented with occupation-related eye injury from 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016 were included in the study. A survey was filled regarding occupation, mechanism of injury, causative hazard and eye protective precaution used. Personal characteristics, examination, the degree of injury, diagnosis, management and complications were recorded. Birmingham Eye Trauma Terminology System was used in injury classification.

Result: Forty-two injured eyes were seen from 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016. Forty (95.2%) were not using safety eyewear. Twenty-two (52.4%) had superficial foreign body, 17 (40.5%) had lamellar laceration, 2 (4.8%) had contusion and 1 (2.4%) had penetrating injury. Fifteen (35.7%) injuries were due to flying particles while grinding, followed by 5 (11.9%) due to hammering. Corneal foreign body was the most common injury, 19 (45.2%). Most frequently injured were construction workers, 14 (33.3%) followed by welders, 10 (23.8%).

Conclusion: Occupational eye injuries could lead to major complications ranging from mild abrasions to blindness. In our study, most of the injuries were due to ignorance and failure to use safety eyewear. It is highly recommended that all employers make it mandatory for all workers to wear appropriate protective eyewear as it decreases the incidence and severity of eye injuries.