

Five Tips to Avoid Toy-Related Eye Injuries

With the holiday shopping season now in full swing, Monmouth Eye Care joins the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) in reminding the public of certain safety guidelines when choosing the perfect gifts for little ones in their lives. A number of recent studies have shown that some popular toy types are commonly associated with childhood eye injuries. These include air guns and other toys that shoot projectiles, high-powered lasers, and sports equipment.

Ophthalmologists – physicians who specialize in medical and surgical eye care – treat the eye injuries that sometimes result from these products. The Academy is encouraging parents to follow these tips when gifting toys to children this holiday season.

1. **Beware of airsoft, BB guns, and other projectile toys.** Every year ophthalmologists treat thousands of patients with devastating eye injuries caused by seemingly safe toys. Avoid items with sharp, protruding or projectile parts such as airsoft guns, BB guns and other nonpowder gun-related toys. Foreign objects can easily propel into the sensitive tissue of the eye.
2. **Never allow children to play with high-powered laser pointers.** A number of recent reports in the [United States](#) and [internationally](#) show that children have sustained serious eye injuries by playing with high-powered lasers (between 1500 and 6000 milliwatts). Over the years, these lasers have become increasingly more powerful, with enough potential to cause severe retinal damage, with just seconds of laser exposure to the eye. The FDA [advises](#) the public to never aim or shine a laser pointer at anyone and to not buy laser pointers for children.
3. **Read labels for age recommendations before you buy.** To select appropriate gifts suited for a child's age, look for and follow the age recommendations and instructions about proper assembly, use, and supervision.
4. **Don't just give presents. Make sure to be present.** Always make sure an adult is supervising when children are playing with potentially hazardous toys or games that could cause an eye injury.
5. **Know what to do (and what not to).** If someone you know experiences an eye injury, seek immediate medical attention from an ophthalmologist. As you wait for medical help, make sure to never to touch, rub, apply pressure, or try to remove any object stuck in the eye. If an eye injury occurs follow these [important care and treatment guidelines](#).

“When the gift-giving and celebratory spirit of the holidays is in full swing, we can forget how easily kids can get injured when playing with certain toys,” said Jane C. Edmond M.D., a clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology.” We hope

people will take steps to shop and play responsibly this year. Following these tips can help make sure our little loved ones have healthy vision for many holiday seasons to come.”

For more information on toy safety, see the American Academy of Ophthalmology's [toy safety page](#) or watch the toy [safety video](#).

About the American Academy of Ophthalmology

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world’s largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, we protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for our patients and the public. We innovate to advance our profession and to ensure the delivery of the highest-quality eye care. Our EyeSmart® program provides the public with the most trusted information about eye health. For more information, visit aao.org.

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