

Facts About Fireworks Injuries

Prevent Blindness wants all Americans to know the dangers of consumer fireworks. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports the following fireworks injury statistics:

- Fireworks devices were involved in an estimated 11,500 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2021 (the latest year for which data is available).
- An estimated 8,500 fireworks related injuries (or 74% of the total estimated fireworks related injuries in 2021) were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments surrounding the 4th of July period.
- Males accounted for 59% of fireworks injuries.
- 29% of fireworks injuries were to children under age 15.
- Young adults, 20-24 years of age, had the highest estimated rate of emergency department treated, fireworks-related injuries.
- The parts of the body most often injured were hands and fingers (31%); head, face, and ears (21%); legs (15%); eyes (14%); trunk/other region (10%); and arms (8%).
- 32% of the emergency department-treated injuries were burns. Burns were the most common injury to hands and fingers.
- There were an estimated 1,500 emergency department-treated injuries associated with firecrackers, and 1,100 with sparklers.
- There were 9 reported nonoccupational fireworks related deaths in 2021.

Keep These Fireworks-Related Injuries in Mind

- A 4-year-old male victim was outside in a field near his home with his father watching others light fireworks. One of the participants lit a multiple tube device and burned themselves, causing them to drop the device. The device shot into the crowd after it was dropped. The firework hit the victim in the left eye and exploded. Due to the nature of the victim's injuries, they were taken via ambulance to a nearby field to be airlifted.



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At the hospital the victim was given stitches for the laceration under his eye, as well as bandages for the burns.

- A 12-year-old male victim was with his friends lighting fireworks in the yard outside of his house. Someone lit a rocket nearby that struck the victim in the left eye. The victim went inside to tell his mother of the incident. The mother then called 911 for emergency medical transport. At the hospital the victim was given an antibiotic ointment as well as a laser eye treatment. The victim was also referred to an eye specialist because surgery would be required to fix the victim's eye. The victim is currently scheduled for surgery to remove a cataract on the injured eye. A second surgery will be needed to repair the lens, as well.
- A victim was struck by a rocket in the eye. The victim has a scheduled surgery to remove a cataract as well as a second surgery to repair the lens of the eye. Doctors hope that with both surgeries the victim will have their sight restored.
- A reloadable device struck a victim under her left arm with debris entering her eye. The victim is unsure of any

long-term consequences but states that she still has a knot in her eye from the infection.

Our Position: Protect Your Sight by Celebrating Safely

Prevent Blindness urges you to celebrate safely. Fireworks are extremely dangerous. Do not purchase, use or store fireworks of any type. Protect yourself, your family and your friends by avoiding fireworks. Attend only authorized public fireworks displays conducted by licensed operators, but be aware that even professional displays can be dangerous.

Prevent Blindness supports the development and enforcement of bans on the importation, sale and use of all fireworks, except those used in authorized public displays by licensed operators, as the only effective means of eliminating the social and economic impact of fireworks-related trauma and damage.

For more on the Prevent Blindness position on fireworks, please request a copy of our complete position statement.

Source: Smith, Blake, Marier, Allison, and Timian, Jennifer, Fireworks-Related Deaths, Emergency Department-Treated Injuries, and Enforcement Activities During 2021, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.