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Prevent Blindness Declares September as Sports Eye Safety Month to Raise Awareness, Provide Education to Help Avoid Eye Injuries

- Prevent Blindness data shows more than 44,000 sports eye injuries were treated in 2025, including those related to fast-growing sport, pickleball -

CHICAGO (Aug. 27, 2026) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's leading patient advocacy organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight, has once again declared September as Sports Eye Safety Month. New [Prevent Blindness data](#) shows that there were more than 44,000 sports-related eye injuries treated in the United States in 2025.

Basketball had the highest rate of eye injuries for those ages 15 and older. Pool and water sports, such as swimming, had the most eye injuries for those ages 14 and younger.

As the popularity of pickleball continues to grow, so does the number of related eye injuries. These may occur from a direct hit by a pickleball or by a paddle, or falls. The [American Academy of Ophthalmology \(AAO\)](#) states that players more likely to sustain an eye injury with more severe consequences include those with myopia or those who have had previous eye surgery. Serious injuries may occur including:

- Corneal abrasion, in which the surface of the eye gets scratched from the edge of a ball
- Berlin's edema, or damage to the retina's outer layers, which can cause decreased vision in the eye for several hours
- Retinal tear or detachment caused by a pickleball impacting the eye directly

To help educate the public on the importance of wearing proper eye protection while playing sports, Prevent Blindness offers free sports eye safety information including a dedicated [webpage](#), fact sheets, and shareable [social media graphics](#).

New this year in the [Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health Expert Series](#) will be the episode "Sports Eye Safety" featuring Stephanie Marioneaux, MD, Prevent Blindness Board of Directors member and President-Elect of the AAO. And the September [Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health podcast](#) will feature Shanyn A. Toulouse, DNP, MEd, RN, NCSN, [National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness Advisory Committee Member](#), and Northeast Regional School Nurse

Consultant, discussing a variety of topics, including the importance of sports eye protection for kids.

“The proper eye protection when playing sports should always be considered part of the uniform,” said Dr. Marioneaux. “Talk to your eye doctor to make sure you have the right eye protection for your sport and your ability, and make sure the lenses have UV-protection.”

Some sports require more than just protective eyewear to protect the face and head. For example, helmet-mounted face guards, face shields, or face cages may also be recommended or required depending on the sport, age of the player, and league rules.

Prescription glasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, and even occupational safety glasses do not provide adequate protection for sports eyewear. All eye protection should meet sport-specific ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) standards. An updated listing of these, including recommendations for pickleball, may be found at: [PreventBlindness.org/recommended-sports-eye-protectors](https://www.preventblindness.org/recommended-sports-eye-protectors).

For more information on sports eye safety and injury prevention, please visit Prevent Blindness at [PreventBlindness.org/sports-eye-safety](https://www.preventblindness.org/sports-eye-safety).

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#), and [YouTube](#).

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