

# 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 11,100 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2016 (the latest year for which data is available).
- > An estimated 7,600 fireworks-related injuries (or 68 percent of the total estimated fireworks-related injuries in 2016) were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments surrounding the 4th of July period.
- > Males accounted for 61% of fireworks injuries.
- > 31% of fireworks injuries were to children under age 15.
- > Young adults 20 to 24 years of age had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated, fireworks-related injuries. Children younger than 5 years of age had the second highest estimated rate.
- > The parts of the body most often injured were hands and fingers (an estimated 33 percent); head, face, and ears (an estimated 20 percent); legs (an estimated 18 percent); eyes (an estimated 9 percent); and arms (an estimated 8 percent).
- > Sixty-nine percent of the emergency department-treated injuries were burns. Burns were the most common injury to all parts of the body, except the eyes, where contusions, lacerations, and foreign bodies in the eyes occurred more frequently
- > There were 4 reported fireworks-related deaths in 2016.

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## Facts About Fireworks Injuries—Continued

### Keep These Fireworks-Related Injuries in Mind

- > An 11-year-old female was in a pool and people were setting off fireworks. When the victim was getting out of the pool, an unspecified firework shot directly at her and struck her in the right eye. The victim sustained retinal damage from blunt force trauma. The victim lost vision in her right eye.
- > A 70-year-old male sat on a picnic table in a garage at his friend's house. His friend's fiancé dropped three aerial mortars into a cannon and ignited the fireworks at the end of the driveway. The victim thought that one of the mortars was put in upside down. The fireworks caught fire, exploded and shot sideways in different directions. The victim was the only person present who could not get out of the way. The fireworks exploded near the victim's eye, and the victim sustained a laceration and his eye was full of blood.
- > A 22-year-old male ignited the first tube of a multiple tube device type firework on the street. The firework exploded right away. The ashes went into the victim's eyes and caused abrasions in both his eyes.
- > A 24-year-old female was at a public display of fireworks. There was a slight breeze and it was more prevalent higher in the air. The victim stared straight up looking at fireworks in the evening sky, and she felt a fragment from fireworks get into her eye. The victim did not feel symptoms until the next day. The victim's eye was scratchy and painful.

### 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.

Call our toll-free hotline at **800.331.2020** to receive Safe Summer Celebrations. The booklet discusses the dangers of fireworks and offers safe alternatives. You can also request a copy of our ***Fireworks Eye Injury Safety Quiz***.

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, request a copy of our complete position statement.

Source: Tu, Yongling, 2016 Fireworks Annual Report: Fireworks-Related Deaths and Emergency Department-Treated Injuries, during 2016, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, June 2017. [https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Fireworks\\_Report\\_2016.pdf?t.YHKjE9bFiabmirA.4NJJST.5SUWlQJ](https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Fireworks_Report_2016.pdf?t.YHKjE9bFiabmirA.4NJJST.5SUWlQJ)

