

Facts About Fireworks Injuries

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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 9,100 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2018 (the latest year for which data is available).
- > An estimated 5,600 fireworks-related injuries (or 62% of the total estimated fireworks-related injuries in 2018) were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments surrounding the 4th of July period.
- > Males accounted for 64% of fireworks injuries.
- > 36% of fireworks injuries were to children under age 15.
- > Children 10 to 14 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 (an estimated 28%); legs (an estimated 24%); eyes (an estimated 19%); head, face, and ears (an estimated 15%); and arms (an estimated 4%).
- > 54% 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 an estimated 500 ER-treated injuries associated with sparklers and 200 injuries due to bottle rockets.
- > There were 5 reported fireworks-related deaths in 2018.



Facts About Fireworks Injuries—Continued

Keep These Fireworks-Related Injuries in Mind

- > An 8-year-old male was on the sidewalk of his apartment complex. An adult male aimed a Roman candle at the victim's eye, and the firework went directly into the victim's eye. The victim was transported to the emergency department and admitted to three hospitals for treatment and surgery. The victim had to have his injured eye removed. In addition, his remaining eye began to close.
- > A 29-year-old male and his friends were setting off fireworks. The victim lit a mortar type firework but it did not go off, so he kicked it out of the way. About 30 minutes later, the victim tried to relight this firework. The victim crouched down and used a long torch lighter to light the firework at an arm-length. The mortar came out the tube at a weird angle and hit the victim in his eye instead of going straight up. The firework blew out the victim's eyebrow ring and injured his eyeball.
- > A 31-year-old female was at a friend's house, and someone set off a Roman candle. The victim saw that the firework was going straight towards her son, so she pushed her son out of the way. The firework hit the victim in her face before she could get away. The victim sustained permanent nerve damage in her face, partial eye loss in the right eye, as well as a hole about an inch in her face. In addition, the victim's seizure disorder had returned as a result of the incident.

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: Tu, Yongling, 2018 Fireworks Annual Report Fireworks-Related Deaths, Emergency Department-Treated Injuries, and Enforcement Activities During 2018, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, June 2019. https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Fireworks_Report_2018.pdf?5kZ4zdr9jPFyhPmeg3Mol35mGX8fB0s7

