

PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR: OBTAINING AND CLEANING PROCEDURE[®]

KEY POINTS

- Protective eyewear (such as safety glasses, goggles or face shields) must be worn while performing any procedure where **(a)** there is a likelihood of splashing, splattering or spraying of biological or chemical substances or **(b)** eye protection is required (e.g. laser procedures).
- Protective eyewear is available to all workers upon request within your work area.
- Reusable protective eyewear must be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Updated references
- Inclusion of prescription safety glasses details

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All managers are to be aware of this policy.
- Local managers to determine which staff are to read and acknowledge they understand to contents of this document.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st May 2021	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Work Health and Safety Manager	Area/Dept: Work Health and Safety

Introduction

Protective eyewear (such as safety glasses, goggles or face shields) must be worn while performing any procedure or task where a risk assessment determines there is a risk of eye injury such as:

- there is a likelihood of splashing, splattering or spraying of blood or other body substances as part of standard and droplet precautions
- during aerosol generating procedures
- there is a likelihood of splashing, splattering or spraying of a chemical substance;
- the procedure requires protective eyewear (such as laser procedures, welding etc)

Protective eyewear is available to all workers who require them and they are available upon request within your work area. Individual workers are responsible for the use and cleanliness of their protective eyewear.

At the discretion of the Nurse Manager/Nursing Unit Manager or CNC Infection Prevention and Control, it may be more appropriate in some ward situations for protective eyewear to be allocated for the care of a particular patient but the protective eyewear must be kept clean and in good condition at all times.

General prescription glasses do not comply with Australian Standards hence protective eyewear must be worn *in addition* to prescription glasses.

Definition and recommendations:

Eyewear must be optically clear, anti-fog, distortion free, close fitting, shielded at the side and conform to AS/NZS 1336:2014 and AS/NZS 1337.1-2010.

- Protective eyewear must be worn and fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- When not in use should be stored clean and dry
- Any protective eyewear that is labelled 'single use' must not be reused and discarded after use.

Prescription Safety Glasses

Eligibility for prescription safety glasses shall be based on individual assessment of each worker's work function and the type of hazards that a person may be exposed to.

A worker can request an alternative to the standard issue "fit over" style safety eye protection.

Workers, with approval for prescription safety glasses, will be entitled to one pair of prescription safety glasses every two years.

If the prescription safety glasses are lost or damaged through a legitimate workplace occurrence, then SCHN will meet the entire cost of replacement.

If the safety glasses are lost or damaged by the worker, they will not be reimbursed for another pair until the two year period has expired.

Laser Safety Eyewear

Laser safety eyewear must be made available to all workers using laser equipment, they must provide sufficient optical density to reduce the power of a laser to be equal or less than the maximum permissible exposure levels and provide damage threshold protection.

The appropriate laser safety eyewear must meet the required specifications of the laser; operating wavelength, power, beam diameter, beam delivery system and work environment based on risk assessment for the task.

Cleaning and Disinfection

If in the course of duty, protective eyewear becomes contaminated with blood or body substances they should be cleaned and disinfected using Standard precautions. Reusable protective eyewear must be cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions after use and stored clean and dry.

Procedure

- Thoroughly clean with neutral detergent and water.
- Rinse well with water.
- Dry protective eyewear with soft material or cloth.
- If the protective eyewear is unable to be cleaned and disinfected successfully (e.g. residual blood is unable to be removed or there is plastic clouding or metal corrosion evident), then the protective eyewear should be discarded in the contaminated waste and a replacement pair obtained.
- If the protective eyewear is allocated on a per patient basis, when the patient is discharged, the protective eyewear may be reallocated for use with another patient. If the protective eyewear is reallocated it must still be in good condition and it must be thoroughly cleaned with neutral detergent and water.
- Further information can be obtained from [ICEG guidelines on cleaning and disinfection of protective eyewear in health and residential care facilities](#).

Safety Rules

- Protective eyewear labelled '*single use*' must not be reused.

Related Information

- [NSW Health Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures PD2018_013](#)

- [SCHN WHS Policy and Commitment Statement](#)
- [SCHN - PPE for Infection Control Precautions](#)

References

1. NSW Ministry of Health- Infection Prevention and Control Policy PD2017_013
2. Clinical Excellence Commission, 2020, Infection prevention and control practice handbook. Clinical Excellence Commission, Sydney, Australia.
http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/383239/IPC-Practice-Handbook-2020.PDF
3. Australian Standards relevant to workplace eye safety

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