

Make sure you take care of your eyes

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WHEN the Deepavali spirit is in the air, it is important to take care to protect your eyes.

Last year, Narayana Nethralaya received more than 40 cases of eye injuries in children just on just one day.

Paediatric ophthalmologist Dr Arun Samprathi says eye injuries are very common in children while bursting crackers. "Boys between 10 and 16 years are more prone to such accidents. Supervision by adults is advisable if chil-



Photo : V Madusudan Rao Maney

dren are to be allowed to handle fireworks," he says.

The doctor feels certain kinds of crackers like rockets and flower

pots are best avoided as they may cause eye injuries.

In case a child suffers from eye injury do not allow it to rub the

eye. If a small hole has occurred in the eye, rubbing will cause the contents in the eye ball come out. In case of fire accidents it is better pour cold water over the burnt area.

Animals too get hurt sometimes. But, Balasubramanyam, manager of the CUPA dog pound, feels it is rare as animals can sense danger. "Unless someone plays pranks on them, they won't get hurt. Moreover they go into a hiding place until the noise reduces."

In case of an accident, rush the victim to the nearest hospital or call this helpline 23389854 (provided by Vidya Eye Hospital).

PRECAUTION

- ◆ Light fireworks outdoors in a clear area away from houses, dry leaves, grass and flammable material.
- ◆ Keep a bucket of water nearby for emergency use.
- ◆ Do not try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Douse and soak them with water and throw them away.
- ◆ Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- ◆ Never ignite fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal container.
- ◆ Keep unused fireworks away from firing areas.
- ◆ Store fireworks in a dry, cool place. Check instructions for special storage directions.
- ◆ Never have any portion of your body directly over a firework while lighting.
- ◆ Don't experiment with home-made fireworks.
- ◆ Do not wear loose clothing near fire or while using fireworks. Avoid synthetic clothing as it is easily inflammable.
- ◆ Protective eyewear prevents eye injuries.
- ◆ Rockets should be launched from a rocket launcher, not a bottle.
- ◆ Sparklers need to be handled carefully too as they burn more than 1,000 degrees. First light them one at a time at arm's length. Always wear gloves while holding a sparkler and never give one to a child below five years.
- ◆ In many cases onlookers and passersby are injured and hence be careful while moving around on roads.

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