A Focus on Eyes
Know WHEN and HOW to protect your eyes in the lab.

**WHEN to Protect Your Eyes**

- When working with chemicals. Chemicals can directly injure your eyes or be absorbed through your skin and eyes.
- When working with infectious or potentially infectious materials, including human source materials.
- When working with open beam class 3B and 4 lasers and UV light.
- When working with equipment that can generate particulate or dust.
- When dispensing or working with cryogenic liquids.
- When working in a chemical fume hood or biological safety cabinet. Do not rely on the sash for eye protection.

**HOW to Protect Your Eyes**

- Wear safety glasses for general protection from chemicals, biological materials, and particulate or dust.
- Wear chemical splash goggles when working with strong acids or alkalis, or when there is a splash risk.
- Wear specialized eyewear when working with lasers.
- Wear safety glasses and a face shield when working with UV light or cryogens.
- Understand that regular prescription eyewear does not provide protection from splashes or impact.
- Test eyewashes regularly and keep them clear.

**Case Study: Nitric Acid Burns to Eyes, no Eye Protection Worn**

A graduate student wearing regular prescription glasses suffered severe burns to both eyes after unintentionally mixing nitric acid with an organic waste while cleaning up a lab. His vision was saved by immediately using an eyewash, but he faced months of treatment and rehabilitation.

Your eyes are irreplaceable. Choose to protect them.

For more information or assistance contact Cornell EHS • ehs.cornell.edu • askEHS@cornell.edu • 607.255.8200