

Lacerations and Puncture Wounds

DON'T TAKE THE RISK

Warning - This contains images that might be disturbing to some readers. Reader discretion is advised.

Keep your eyes open to keep them both in your head.

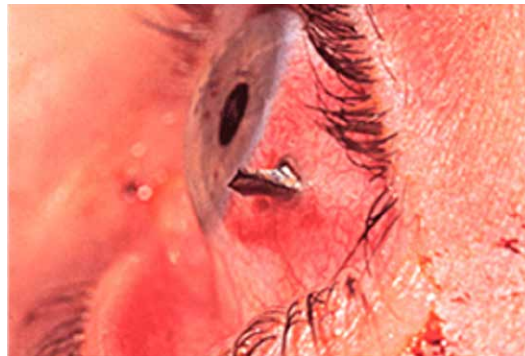
True story.

A tradie was struck in the eye by a metal fragment from a screw whilst ripping a length of second-hand timber with a circular saw. The timber had been checked, but one metal screw wasn't seen and the safety glasses were on top of the tradie's head when the metal flicked up into their eye.

What happened?

Two mistakes led to this injury:

- The screw was visible but the timber wasn't checked carefully enough so it wasn't noticed.
- Safety glasses weren't being worn at the time.



It only takes a minute to plan and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

- Always thoroughly inspect the material prior to cutting as even new timber may contain foreign material of some kind.
- Discuss any hazards associated with the task and get agreement on what to do.
- Wear your Personal Protective Equipment - appropriate eye protection (glasses / goggles / face shields) whenever using a circular saw as there will always be the potential for injury from flying objects.
- If anything goes into your eye get it promptly attended to; avoid rubbing the eye; flush the eye using an approved eyewash; never attempt to remove an object embedded in the eye; seek medical attention for incidents involving chemicals, metallic objects (grinding dust), cuts, punctures etc.

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Circular saws can be deadly.

True story.

When an apprentice was ripping timber the circular saw 'kicked back' and caused horrific cuts to their wrist.

What happened?

Three mistakes led to this injury:

- The timber pinched the saw blade causing it to "kick back" over the apprentice's hand.
- Both the apprentice's hands were not holding the saw whilst making the cut.
- The timber was not adequately secured whilst being cut.



It only takes a minute to plan and avoid hurting yourself or someone else.

- Always make sure the material being cut is properly secured. This is of critical importance when cutting small or flexible pieces of timber or when ripping.
- Keep Both Hands Clear. Make sure you use both hands when operating the saw and don't place them either immediately in front of, behind or under the saw when making the cut.
- Talk to your boss about safer ways to do the job - such as the use of portable table saws or having larger quantities pre-cut off-site
- Training / Instruction / Supervision - always ensure you have received an adequate explanation, guidance, direction and are following safe work practices. If you haven't received training in that tool don't use it.

You should be aware of this

Legally you have an obligation to help keep the worksite safe by identifying any potential hazards associated with the job you are doing and sort them out before you start working. Please utilise all the safety equipment and clothing you are given and do everything reasonably practical to eliminate hazards and control the risks to the health and safety of yourself and those around you.

If you do not feel safe, don't do it. Simply stop and speak with your employer, host trainer or field officer.

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