UAB Callahan Eye Hospital  

For 50 years, UAB Callahan Eye Hospital has focused on delivering innovative eye care and pioneering breakthroughs in the preservation and restoration of eyesight. We have been recognized internationally and nationally for outstanding patient care, treatment of eye trauma, and crucial research in eye disease. Our outstanding services and accomplishments include:

- One of the few facilities in the world entirely dedicated to advancements in ophthalmology
- One of the busiest eye care centers in the nation
- One of only two Level-1 Ocular Trauma Centers in the United States with a 24/7 eye emergency department
- The only dedicated facility in Alabama specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of the eye
- Nine dedicated operating rooms that support more than 11,000 eye surgeries annually
- Award-winning patient care, having earned prestigious Press Ganey awards in 2010, 2011, and 2013
- Named in 2013 as one of the “100 Great Places to Work in Healthcare” by Becker’s Hospital Review
- Pioneering developments in surgical instrumentation, devices, and procedures used by ophthalmologists around the world
- Home to a comprehensive eye research program and the state’s only accredited ophthalmology training program provided by the UAB Department of Ophthalmology

Eye Emergency and Eye Trauma

Located on the first floor of the UAB Callahan Eye Hospital, the eye emergency and trauma department has ophthalmology specialty trained physicians and nursing staff available 24/7, as well as access to all the special supplies, instrumentation, and equipment needed to properly evaluate eye emergencies / injuries.

Eye injuries cannot be diagnosed over the telephone. If you are concerned about injury to your eye, please visit our eye emergency department.

Fireworks and Eye Injuries

Each Fourth of July, thousands of people are injured by consumer fireworks. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 9,000 fireworks-related injuries happen each year. Of these, nearly half are head-related injuries, with nearly 30 percent of those being injuries to the eyes. One-fourth of fireworks-related eye injuries result in permanent vision impairment or blindness.

Children are the most common victims of firework accidents, with those 15 years old or younger accounting for half of all fireworks eye injuries in the United States. For children under the age of five, seemingly harmless sparklers account for one-third of all fireworks injuries. Sparklers can burn at nearly 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, which is hot enough to cause a third-degree burn.

Among the most serious injuries is abrupt trauma to the eye from bottle rockets, which fly erratically and often injure bystanders. Injuries from bottle rockets can include eye lid lacerations, corneal abrasions, traumatic cataract, retinal detachment, optic nerve damage, rupture of the eyeball, eye muscle damage, and complete blindness.

Recommendations to prevent eye injuries:

- Never let children play with fireworks of any type.
- Always have an adult present.
- Never use bottle rockets.
- Never allow young children to play with fireworks, even sparklers. Sparklers can reach 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, hot enough to melt gold.
- Never try to re-light fireworks that did not explode or ignite the first time.
- Keep a bucket of water or fire extinguisher present in case of fire.
- Light fireworks on a clean, flat surface away from the house or flammable materials.
- Read and follow all manufacturers’ warnings and instructions.
- If there are no instructions or product labels, the item may have been made illegally and could be unsafe; illegal fireworks, which are made without the quality-control standards of legal products, are extremely unpredictable.
- In the event of eye injury, do not touch, rub or press on the injured eye; seek immediate care from an ophthalmologist or hospital emergency room.
- Light only one item at a time.
- Never throw fireworks at another person.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks from metal or glass containers.
- Never experiment with or modify fireworks.
- Never attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Leave the lighting of fireworks to trained professionals.
- Follow directives given by event ushers or public safety personnel.
- If you find unexploded fireworks remains, do not touch them. Immediately contact your local fire or police departments.
- View fireworks from a safe distance: at least 500 feet away, or up to a quarter of a mile for best viewing.
- If you get an eye injury from fireworks, seek medical help immediately.