

PPE – Eye protection

Safety Glasses

- Dental practitioners and clinical support staff must wear protective eyewear during procedures where there is the potential for penetrating injury or exposure to aerosols, splattering or spraying with blood, saliva or body substances. Reusable or disposable eyewear supplied for use in dental practice is required to conform to AS/NZS 1337.

Conventional Corrective Glasses

- Conventional prescription glasses lack adequate side splash protection so additional protection is required in the form of safety glasses, a mask with a visor attached, or a face shield.
- Prescription lenses can often be inserted in frames designed to provide a suitable level of protection to the orbital region. A variety of corrective lenses (including bi- and tri-focals or transition lenses) can be fitted into frames approved as protective safety glasses.

Loupes

- When loupes are worn, ensure that side protection is fitted. Loupes without side protection require additional side splash protection in the form of a mask with a visor attached, or a face shield.

Face Shields

- An alternative to protective eyewear is a face shield. Corrective glasses or magnifying loupes may be worn beneath a face shield. A face shield may be an independent transparent visor supported in front of the face to shield the face and front of the neck, or it may be attached to a mask as a single unit.
- Because a face shield does not protect the wearer from inhaled microorganisms, it must always be worn in conjunction with a surgical mask.
- For procedures that involve a high level of splash, consider wearing a mask with visor attached or a face shield over an appropriate surgical mask/respirator
- Face shields and visors never replace the need to wear an appropriate face mask.

COVID-19

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence has emerged that protective eyewear can reduce the risk of infection on the basis that the lacrimal duct joins the external parts of the eyes to the upper parts of the respiratory tract, and this can be a pathway for infection with SARS-CoV-2. Using proper eye protection is more important now than ever before.

References

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[ADA Guidelines for Infection Control](#)