

What is Eye Wash?

“4,410 people sustained an eye injury in the workplace.”

2021 labour force Report.

Our eyes are extremely delicate organs that can easily be damaged. During our working lives we can be exposed to hazards that can cause injury or irritation to our eyes. When the eye is contaminated with a harmful chemical or foreign object, it must be washed out as quickly as possible to reduce irritation and the likelihood of injury or infection.

For serious eye injuries, the emergency services must be contacted. Eyewash is used to clean the eye and prevent irritation or injury from occurring or getting worse until medical attention can be given if this is needed.

WHERE CAN EYE INJURIES OCCUR?

Eye injuries can occur in all workplaces. An assessment of potential risks and hazards is important to ascertain the risk level and to identify the right first aid equipment to deal with accidents for the safety of employees. Workplaces with a higher risk of eye injuries include:

Factories. Where material thrown by moving parts such as wood chips and dust can cause eye injuries and irritation.

Construction sites. Brick dust, cement, stone chips, and other airborne debris can cause eye injuries.

Kitchens. Airborne particles from cooking ingredients and splashback from hot pans can lead to eye injuries and irritation.

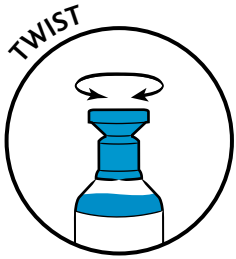
WHAT IS EYEWASH?

There are two main types of eyewash solution:

Saline – An isotonic solution made of 0.9% Pharmaceutical grade salt mixed into water – Commonly used to remove dust, dirt, wood, metal oil and solvents from the eye and soothe irritation until the object is removed or further medical help is available.

Buffered Phosphate – a neutralizing solution designed to neutralize and flush any extreme pH levels from the eye - Commonly used by the police in cases of acid attacks to neutralise the acid and remove it from the affected area. After eye or skin contact with acid or alkalis, it is only seconds before the pH value is significantly altered, and the corrosive damage may lead to permanent injury. Acid and alkalis must be quickly neutralised to a pH value equal to the normal level in the eye or on the skin. The use of ordinary water or 0.9 % sodium chloride will only provide a limited degree of effective dilution with an increased flushing time.





HOW DO YOU USE EYE WASH?

"If mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, at least one litre of sterile water or sterile normal saline (0.9% w/v) in sealed, disposable containers should be provided." Health and Safety Executive

Some high-risk workplaces provide access to "plumbed in" eye wash stations which provide a flow of mains water to help to flush contaminants from the eyes. Whilst a more permanent solution, they dispense cold, chlorinated water directly from the mains which is not sterile and can irritate the eye. For most organisations, a portable solution is sufficient or preferable. A portable eyewash station can be wall mounted or provided in a first aid kit and contains bottled eye wash solution that can be administered directly to the eyes.

WHAT IS AN EYEWASH STATION?

An eye wash station provides all that is needed to provide immediate first aid for eye injuries and irritations. Eye wash stations are designed to be wall mounted and easily accessible. Typically, eyewash stations include bottled 500ml eyewash or smaller 20ml eye wash pods, a mirror to assist in locating the debris or contaminant in the eye and eye pad dressings.

Reliance offer a range of eyewash stations to meet the needs of the modern workplace including:



903: Triple Eye Wash Station



919: Vision Eye Wash Station



906: Double Eye Wash Station



908: Eye Pod Station



Eye pad dressings are designed to protect the eye from further injury and contaminants. Eye pads are sterile and absorbent with a non-stick coating.

Reliwash provides fast, effective relief for immediate emergency flushing. The easy-to-squeeze bottle has a uniquely designed eye cup that allows the eye to be irrigated whether the user is standing, sitting, or lying down. A perforated plate breaks up the stream of water, providing a gentle spray into the eye. Used eye wash exits through a drain tube and is prevented from going back into the bottle. Redcap is designed to quickly neutralise the pH value of acids and alkalis and prevent corrosive damage to the eyes and skin. Redcap bottles also feature an integrated eyecup.



Eye wash pods 20ml of eye wash solution supplied in twist top pod for quick and easy use while treating of minor eye irritations where only a small amount of eye wash is required).