DESCRIPTION

Chemical eye burns can occur when the eye comes into contact with a hazardous solid, liquid, or vaporous chemical. The severity of the burn depends on the type of chemical, the concentration and volume of the chemical, and the duration of contact.

**Alkali Burns**: These burns involve chemicals with a high pH, and are the most hazardous. They may penetrate the eye, and cause damage to its vital inner components. In the worst cases, they may lead to conditions such as cataracts and glaucoma and may cause vision loss or blindness.

**Acid Burns**: Burns resulting from contact with lower pH chemicals tend to be less serious than alkali burns, but can still be serious. While these burns may not penetrate the eye, they still may cause significant damage to the cornea, potentially resulting in the loss of vision.

**Irritations**: Contact lenses may absorb the chemical and cause irritation and/or damage to the cornea.

RISK RATING

Score: High Risk
Explanation: Consequence = Major
(Significant lost time injury/extremely serious/possible fatality)
Likelihood = Possible (Might occur)

ACTIONS FOR PREVENTION:

- Contact lenses are not to be worn in the laboratory, unless fully enclosed, tight-fitting eye goggles are worn;
- Fully enclosed, tight-fitting eye goggles must be worn over prescription glasses;
- Alternatively, prescription safety glasses must be worn.

AS/NZS 1336: 2014 Eye and Face Protection – guidelines


https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/prevention/contact_len.html

More Information:  Liz Holzschuster, Health Safety & Wellbeing Manager