



RESULTS FROM **2014 EYE SPLATTER SURVEY**



This year, TIDI Products had a unique opportunity to conduct a survey of attendees at the annual conferences of both the AORN (Association of periOperative Registered Nurses) and the APIC (Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology); regarding the incidence of spray, splash and splatter occurrences to the eye. The results of those surveys indicate that those occurrences may be much greater than previously expected.

While the study was strictly anecdotal and not a controlled research study, it brings attention to a potentially serious and seemingly underappreciated problem for health care workers. The attendees at these two conferences were asked to answer two questions:

1. Have you or any of your colleagues been the recipient of a splash or spray to the eye?

- Yes
- No

2. What type of protective eyewear is in use at your facility?

- Disposable
- Reusable
- Disposable Lens with Reusable Frame

BACKGROUND

An actual research study was conducted by Victor Lange and [published in the American Journal of Infection Control \(AJIC\)](#). It found that nearly one-half (45%) of all protective eyewear devices tested positive for contamination following use in a surgical setting (38% of disposables and 95% of reusables) even though power tools were only used in 27% of the cases. Further, the study disclosed that near three-fourths (74%) of the time the reusable items still contained microbial contaminants after disinfection. Another discovery identified by this study was that many times the splash, spray or splatter occurrences were unrecognized by the healthcare worker wearing the protective eyewear.

In addition, TIDI Products has compiled a list of [56 resources that address the need for protective eyewear](#). These resources are comprised of articles, documents and standards relating to eyewear infection incidents and recommendations.

EYE SPLASH SURVEY RESULTS

We previously posted a blog summarizing the results of the [AORN eye splatter survey](#). The AORN annual conference was held in Chicago in April, and the survey results showed that 73% (363) of the 495 respondents answered in the affirmative and only 27% (132) checked the “No” box.

The APIC annual conference was held in Anaheim, CA, in June. The eye splash survey results here were even more remarkable. Of the 276 respondents at that conference, 226 (82%) of them checked the “Yes” box, while only 50 (18%) answered in the negative.

Combining the results of both surveys yields 589 (76.4%) positive responses and 181 (23.6%) negative replies. It would seem from this that approximately three-fourths of OR nurses and infection prevention personnel have, or know someone who has, experienced splatter of blood, mucus or other potentially infectious bodily fluids to the mucous membranes of the eye.



PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR SURVEY RESULTS

The second question on the survey dealt with the type of protective eyewear that was in use in the various hospitals or health care systems. Here are the results:

AORN Conference

Type	Disposable only	Reusable only	Disposable lens w/ Reusable Frames	Disposable and Reusable	Disposable & DLwRF	Reusable and DLwRF	Disposable, Reusable & DLwRF	TOTAL
Respondents	191	40	134	31	40	15	52	503
Percent	37.97%	7.95%	26.64%	6.16%	7.95%	2.98%	10.34%	100.00%
Rounded %	38	8	27	6	8	3	10	100

APIC Conference

Type	Disposable only	Reusable only	Disposable lens w/ Reusable Frames	Disposable and Reusable	Disposable & DLwRF	Reusable and DLwRF	Disposable, Reusable & DLwRF	TOTAL
Respondents	144	30	23	54	10	3	14	278
Percent	51.80%	10.79%	8.27%	19.42%	3.60%	1.08%	5.04%	100.00%
Rounded %	52	11	8	19	4	1	5	100

	AORN	APIC	Combined Results	TOTAL %
Disposable Only	191	144	335	43
Reusable Only	40	30	70	9
Disp Lens w Reusable Frames	134	23	157	20
Disposable & Reusable	31	54	85	11
Disposable & DLwRF	40	10	50	6
Reusable & DLwRF	15	3	18	2
Disp, Reusable & DLwRF	52	14	66	9

The survey results indicate that occupational exposure of the healthcare worker's eyes due to eye splash and spray is still very common despite the fact that the majority of facilities utilize protective eyewear. The types of protective eyewear used demonstrate that there is a preference for disposable eyewear and eyewear with a disposable lens and reusable frame. Thus, there is a general awareness that the use of disposable eyewear will help to provide better protection from potentially contaminated splatter and reduce the cross contamination risk associated with reusable protective eyewear and components. The CDC is very specific in their recommendations. They advise healthcare professionals to definitely use eye protection. Their [2007 Guidelines for Isolation Precautions](#) state; *"Personal eyeglasses and contact lenses are NOT considered adequate eye protection."* (Emphasis is theirs). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogens Standard mandates eyewear use when blood or body fluid exposure is likely. OSHA states lack of proper eye protection is a primary reason for eye injury and infection transmission.

The risk of infection and contamination via the eye is underrated. In many cases, the risk is there already; it is a known. And then there are unknown risks, with no apparent possible event. And, there are very real, possibly life-threatening consequences associated with eye contamination. Based on research, many healthcare procedures "may" subject the healthcare worker to contamination. In general, a good rule of thumb whether the risk of exposure is anticipated or not, is to protect yourself from the unknown, the inadvertent occurrences that may cause harm. That is why it is important you stay informed of the risk, so that prior to clinical care you take a split second and "STOP" to think about the risk involved with the particular patient and ask yourself what personal protection do I need to wear with this patient, this procedure, this task that I am doing? Being aware of the risk and doing something to protect yourself will make a huge difference. To keep it simple, any circumstance where gloves and masks are donned, protective eyewear should be worn as well.

THE CHARGE: WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

Use advanced disposable eyewear.

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ABOUT TIDI PRODUCTS

TIDI Products manufactures single-use infection prevention products for the medical, dental and foodservice markets, and a variety of poly films for converters. The materials we use to produce disposable products enhance their performance and convenience.

We're focused on understanding the needs of professional care providers and the desires of the patients they care for. Our products provide specific solutions to meet precise needs, and we offer an array of clear choices, based on key factors that matter most to the people who use them.

We're also dedicated to helping distributors build their brands and market share, offering value-added support with private label packaging of selected products, as well as promotional materials. We're confident that our end-user focus assures the right product mix.

Building a sustainable future with a purpose

Our commitment to LEAN Manufacturing increases efficiencies, eliminates waste, and improves the customer experience. One example is the Zero Waste Program, which will have a considerable impact on the environment by eliminating all material waste within the plant, repurpose materials, and reduce energy usage. Not only are we improving our efficiencies to continually improve our customer experience, but also reducing our impact on the environment.

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