

ALERT: Total Solar Eclipse Affecting North America - April 8, 2024

RESOURCES AND EDUCATION FOR OLDER ADULTS



On the Monday, April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse will cross North America. The eclipse will travel across portions of Mexico, the central and eastern United States, and southeastern Canada. According to NASA, a solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun at just the right time, with the Moon creating a shadow on a portion of the Earth's surface. If you have plans to view the solar eclipse or if you live in an area that will experience

a total solar eclipse, it's important that you plan ahead and review these safety tips. This document is intended to assist hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, dialysis centers, and all other health care providers plan for the upcoming total solar eclipse. In preparation, please take the time to review this document and share this information with your patients/residents, facilities, and staff.



A total eclipse can last up to four minutes, depending on your location. You can see the Sun and an eclipse with special eclipse or solar viewing glasses.



NEVER look directly at the Sun without appropriate eyewear.



Regular sunglasses are **NOT** safe to view an eclipse.



WARNING: Looking at the sun is dangerous.
Refer to safety instructions on the next page.

Total Solar Eclipse Resources and Education for Older Adults (continued)

Access to Care

- In anticipation of the eclipse, if possible, consider altering your treatment or appointment schedule to avoid traveling during the event. Similarly to a holiday, facilities may choose to treat patients the Sunday prior to the event or the following day if staffing permits.
- Consider changes in elective surgery scheduling.
- Consider temporarily increasing discharge materials or medications to avoid urgent prescription refills.
- Maintain awareness of transfers between facilities.



Staffing

- Depending on your facility or patient location, staff could be impacted by increased congestion, school closures, and traffic delays. Staff should be notified of the eclipse in advance and advised to prepare accordingly.
- As increased traffic is anticipated, please consider any staff delays or call-offs. Review shift changes and report times. Message and communicate with your staff regularly before and during the event.

Travel Safety

- With so many people traveling, please check local and national advisories well ahead of time.
- Travelers should make sure to bring food, water, and medication. They should determine how to access a bathroom if they encounter heavy traffic.

**If you are driving, do not look up at the sun.
And be aware of any stopped vehicles on the roads.**

- Mass gatherings may be taking place to view the eclipse, so be mindful of extra traffic and plan the best way to leave and enter areas. Communicate with local law enforcement and emergency services for more information.

Food/Water/Medication Safety

- Since there may be an influx of people coming to your area, you may not be able to access food, water, or medications quickly during this time. Be sure to plan accordingly.

Eye Safety

- Use eclipse glasses or solar viewers that meet the ISO 12312-2 standards (sometimes written as ISO 12312-2:2015). Take breaks and do not stare continuously at the Sun.
- Viewing any part of the bright Sun through a camera lens, binoculars, or a telescope can cause severe eye injury.

Skin Safety

- Even during the partial phases of a total solar eclipse, the Sun is very bright. If you are watching an entire eclipse, you may be in direct sunlight for hours. Remember to wear sunscreen, a hat, and protective clothing to prevent skin damage.

Resources

- [National Weather Service: April 8, 2024 Total Eclipse](#)
- [NASA - About the Eclipse: Eclipses - NASA Science](#)
- [National Safety Council \(NSC\): Safely View a Solar Eclipse](#)
- [Great American Eclipse: Total Solar Eclipse 2024 US](#)