



## Safety Corner

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### **An Accident Involving Splash of Concentrated Sulphuric Acid onto the Eyes**

The accident occurred in a chemistry practical lesson when the students of S.6 were performing an individual experiment on qualitative analysis of an unknown sample. A student had completed the experiment and was writing up his laboratory report. He had taken off his safety spectacles, but was



still wearing a laboratory coat. Another student sitting near was heating some halide solids in a test tube filled with one-third of concentrated sulphuric acid. Unexpectedly, some concentrated sulphuric acid spurted out from the test tube and splashed onto the first student's left eye, right forearm and left thigh. The accident was promptly reported to the teacher. The affected area of the student was immediately washed with water. The student was then sent to nearby hospital for medical treatment. The student was released after treatment and took an one-week sick leave.

Eye injuries commonly occurred to students who had completed their practical work and removed their own safety spectacles while washing up or before others around them had finished. In order to avoid similar laboratory accidents happening in the future, teachers are requested to note the following:

1. Whenever safety spectacles are required, they should be continually worn by all until everyone has finished the relevant activity.
2. Whenever possible, reaction mixture containing concentrated sulphuric acid should be heated in a boiling tube instead of a test tube. The amount of concentrated sulphuric acid in the boiling tube should be small so that constant swirling of the mixture can be accomplished easily during heating.

