

# Silly Shooterz toy shoots Silly Bandz; But is popular holiday toy safe?

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Careful where you aim that holiday toy

[Silly Shooterz](#), a game in which kids shoot the popular silicone-shaped "bandz" at targets in an effort to accumulate points may cause more damage than meets the eye.

But is it a good idea to shoot rubber bands from a plastic gun?

"They are as safe as any of the types of toy guns out there on the market," [Doron Fetman](#), director of operations for [Nextrend Imports, Inc.](#) which introduced the game, told the News said. "They're just the same as a [Nerf ball](#)."

The game is meant for kids ages 8 and over.



But a shot to the eye, even with a soft band, might not be so fun, ophthalmologists warn.

"They are definitely dangerous," said [Dr. Douglas Lazzaro](#), chairman of ophthalmology at [Long Island College Hospital](#). "They shoot with a little velocity and if they hit the eye, they can definitely do some damage."

Should they strike the eye with enough impact, the silicone "bandz" could cause a hyphema, which is blood in the front of the eye and which can lead to loss of vision, Lazzaro said.

And, he added, "You could theoretically damage the lens of the eye as well, causing a cataract."

**Anything that comes out of a gun and is propelled – even a silicone band - is a potential danger if it hits the eye, agreed [Dr. Mark Fromer](#), ophthalmologist at [Lenox Hill Hospital](#) and eye surgeon director for the [New York Rangers](#). He cites as potential injuries a corneal abrasion or even a retinal tear or detachment that would require surgery and could be vision threatening.**

**"And it does not have to be fast at all," Fromer said . "Anything that shoots isn't a good thing for a kid to have in his hands."**

When the company test marketed the \$9.99 Silly Shooterz, they gave it to 100 kids in the [Rockland County](#) area, according to [PR Newswire](#).

"All the kids ran into their homes and brought out their oversized boxes of bandz to see which flew the furthest," Fetman said.

He called the product "an overwhelming success" and a "must-have gift for the upcoming holiday season."

On the Sillyshooterz website, the kids wear protective glasses, which reduces the risk of an eye injury, Lazzaro said.

"If they wear glasses and the eyes don't get hit they are probably safe," he said.

It's a question of whether or not parents can actually make kids wear protective glasses. Parents shouldn't minimize the dangers of the bands just because they are so light, Lazzaro said.

"Even a rubber band can cause damage to the eye," he explained.