Protecting Your Eyes from Digital Strain

Many who have to rely heavily on digital devices for work have felt the discomfort of digital eye strain.

Even if you're on a device for social or entertainment reasons rather than professional ones, you might be familiar with this problem too. It only takes two hours of screen time per day to give us a 90% chance of developing digital eye strain, and in this technological age, it's no wonder ten million people a year are seeing eye doctors for it.

Symptoms of Digital Eye Strain

With something this common, it's important to be able to **recognize the symptoms** so that you can begin to take the right precautions to prevent and minimize eye strain. Bright screens are often the culprits behind:

- Eyes feeling either very watery or unusually dry
- A burning or itching sensation in the eyes
- Blurry or double vision
- Frequent headaches and soreness in the neck, shoulders, or back
- Increased sensitivity to light
- Trouble concentrating
- Difficulty keeping your eyes open

Symptoms like these can result in a major productivity drain (as high as 20%!), which is especially bad for those who do most or all of their work on a computer. So what can we do to protect our eyes from our screens?

Countermeasures to Fight the Strain

If screens are causing the problem, then it would make sense that less screen time would solve it, but that isn't always possible. The good news is that **there are plenty of other things we can do** to reduce and sometimes fully eliminate eye strain.

Set up Your Workspace with Eye Comfort in Mind

What angle does your computer screen make to your eyes when you're using it? To ensure maximum comfort, try to position it so that it is at least 20 inches from your eyes, **slightly below eye level and angled upward**. Also place reference materials somewhere you won't have to constantly turn your head to look at them.

Squinting Under the Glare?

The problem isn't necessarily your computer screen itself; **it could be glare from overhead lighting or windows**. If you can eliminate glare while also keeping that ideal comfortable angle, do it! If not, it might be a good idea to get a glare filter for your screen.

Live by the 20-20-20 Rule

A funny thing about using digital devices is that we tend to blink less often when we use them than we do when looking at anything else. **An easy trick to make up for less frequent blinking is the 20-20-20 rule.** All it means is that every 20 minutes of screen time, we should take a 20 second break and focus on something at least 20 feet away instead. We recommend setting reminders to help get into the habit.

First Sunglasses, Now Computer Glasses

The same way we can protect our eyes from the sun with sunglasses, we can also wear **special computer glasses to protect against eye strain**. Anyone who uses their screens for graphic design might not benefit as much from this because these glasses tend to mess with the colors you see, but for anyone else, they could be a great solution.

Ask an Optometrist!

If you have any questions or concerns about eye strain and what to do about it, we're happy to help! We don't want any of our patients suffering in silence, so don't hesitate to ask us about eye strain or any other vision-related problem you might have.

Thank you for trusting us with your vision health!

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Fabulously planned… Remembered always.
It's what we do. Throwback to last newyear event.