

Avoiding digital eye strain



Many people spend a lot of time in front of a computer screen at their job. And when we're not at our desks, we may be looking at a smartphone or tablet or watching TV. All of these digital screens add up to a lot of strain on the eyes. Viewing a digital screen is hard on the eyes due to glare and reflections. Most screens also have less defined letters than printed paper, making them harder to read.

Digital eye strain, or computer vision syndrome, may cause dry eyes or blurred vision, but it can affect other areas of the body as well. Some people also experience headaches and neck and shoulder pain. If these symptoms bother you when you're using a digital screen, you may have digital eye strain.

When you are viewing a screen for long periods, protect your eyes from strain by following these tips:

- Keep your screen about four to five inches below eye level.
- Avoid glare by moving the screen away from windows and bright lights. Consider a screen glare filter if needed.
- Rest your eyes throughout the day with the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Think about blinking. Many people blink less frequently while viewing a screen. Be intentional about blinking so your eyes stay moist.
- Get regular eye exams from a qualified doctor or optometrist. Be sure to tell your doctor if you notice any symptoms of digital eye strain or vision changes.

Source: American Optometric Association