



Computer-Related Vision Problems Are on the Rise

Suffering from eyestrain after long hours in front of the computer? You're not alone

If you are part of the 46 percent of Americans who spend five or more hours a day on a computer or a smart phone¹, you probably already know that a long day staring at your screen can sometimes lead to tired eyes and headaches. But did you know these issues could also be signs of Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)? According to the American Optometric Association, studies show that 41 percent of Americans say they've experienced eyestrain, and 45 percent cited neck or back pain after prolonged use of a computer or hand-held mobile device.² And with computers dominating our work and home lives, computer-related vision problems are increasing.

Besides tired eyes and headaches, other symptoms of CVS include double vision, eyestrain and sometimes even neck and shoulder aches. The reason is that our eyes have a harder time focusing on characters on a computer screen. Unlike printed type, computer characters are brightest at the center and lighter on the edges. The eyes jump around as they try to focus, making them tired and affecting other areas of the upper body.³

Fortunately, the effects of CVS are neither permanent nor damaging to the eye. Still, symptoms of CVS can be uncomfortable and can reduce productivity by as much as 20 percent.⁴ According to the American Optometric Association, about 10 million eye exams performed annually in the United States are prompted by vision problems from computer use.⁵

However, you can help combat CVS by following a few simple steps:⁶

- Get an eye exam before starting a job that requires extensive computer use.
- Use a flat-panel monitor or LCD screen that has crisper resolutions.
- Place the monitor at eye level about 20 to 26 inches away from you. Always use the computer in proper light.
- Blink more often to keep your eyes moist.
- Take breaks from your computer to rest your eyes.
- Visit your eye doctor annually to monitor and manage symptoms, unless otherwise recommended by your eye doctor.

For some, CVS symptoms can be relieved with computer eyewear or UV coating on your lenses to reduce glare. Talk with your eye doctor to learn about these options.

In today's information age, you probably can't avoid spending long hours in front of a computer screen. However, by following a few preventive measures, you can make working on a computer easier on the eyes.

1 American Optometric Association, "Healthy Vision on the Job is Everyone's Business," 2010.

2 Ibid.

3 American Optometric Association, "Vision Discomfort Associated with Computer Vision Syndrome," 2008.

4 Daum, KM, et al. "Productivity associated with visual status of computer users." *Optometry* (2004) 75:1 pp 1-15.

5 American Optometric Association, "Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)," 2011.

6 Ibid.

To learn more and find an eye doctor in your area, visit: www.eyesiteonwellness.com

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