

Digital eye strain

Tips for a screen-heavy lifestyle

Using digital devices for long periods of time can lead to discomfort, including eye strain and dry eye. If you spend a lot of time viewing a computer screen or a smart phone, consider the following tips:

Don't over-work your eyes. Screen-based activities often take extra focus and concentration, which puts extra stress on your vision.

Consider using a portable humidifier if your working environment is particularly dry. A dry environment can contribute to dry eye symptoms, particularly if you don't blink often enough (see below).

Take regular breaks to look away from your screen. Every 20 minutes, shift your gaze to look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Thinking of this as the **20:20:20 rule** may help you remember to do it.

Get your eyes checked by an optometrist to make sure that your visual needs are being met. Older people who need help with distance and near vision may find that they need to add another level of correction to help with "intermediate" distance tasks, like working at a computer.

Remember to blink! When you focus on a digital screen for a long period of time, you may not blink often enough - or your eyelids may not close as completely as they should, drying the surface of your eye. Of course this is particularly a problem if you wear contact lenses!



**TALK TO YOUR
EYE CARE PROFESSIONAL**
about your options