

Parish Nursing News



I am sure like myself you are at times caught up with the electronic age that we live in. Not only may you be using a computer at work but then like most of us, use the computer or other electronic devices at home during your leisure time. I usually call it quits when I get a headache, my eyes are blurry or burn or maybe I am supposed to be getting supper ready.

We all know that it's good to take breaks during prolonged computer or other device use. But what's really happening when we overexert our eyes? Staring at your screen can lead to a variety of ailments including headaches, eyestrain, blurred vision, dry and irritated eyes, slow refocusing, neck and backache, sensitivity to light, double vision and color distortion – all common symptoms of a condition known as Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) which is a complex of eye and vision problems related to near work and are experienced during or are related to computer, IPAD, Kindle, Phone Screens and other hand held devices usage. (The American Optometric Association)

Headaches are the primary reason most people seek an eye exam. They're also one of the most difficult problems to diagnose and treat effectively. Visual-related headaches most often:

- *Occur toward the front of the head
- *Occur most often toward the middle or the end of your work day
- *Don't appear upon awakening
- *Don't produce visual "aura" or flashing lights
- *Occur in a different pattern (or not at all) if you are not using your computer or devices
- *Occur on one side of the head more than the other.



Nature's made our visual system so dominant that we will often alter our body's posture to accommodate any deficiency in the way we see. If our visual system isn't seeing properly, we may assume awkward positions to compensate which can lead to neck and back pain.

Constantly focusing on close objects without a break can strain your eyes. Your eyes are muscles too and need to have regular breaks to avoid feeling weary from overuse. When you focus on "close-up" objects for extended periods of time without taking a break your eye muscles begin to "adapt" to that range of vision. This stresses the muscles, which then have difficulty relaxing. If you tend to work on your computer or other device for prolonged periods of time, be sure to take a 20 second break every 20 minutes and look at least 20 feet away. (20/20/20 rule)

Although blinking is a reflex, we tend to blink less often when looking at a computer or other device than when reading or performing other tasks. This causes our eyes to become dry, uncomfortable and even blurred. Remember to blink often or even consider artificial tears.

Your eyes may be working harder than you think if your prescription doesn't offer the right correction. Make sure that you've had a recent eye exam and that your prescription is up to date.

So in your viewing environment, check and make sure that you don't have a dirty screen, poor viewing angle, reflected glare, too small of a font, inadequate contrast setting, low refresh rate or a poor quality or defective monitor.

Remember that our eyes are important muscles too and that we should exercise and take care of them just like we do with any other muscles in our bodies.



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