

Is Computer Use Straining Your Eyes?

Computer use is a fact of modern life, but your eyes may be feeling the burn. If you wear glasses, they were probably designed to correct near vision and help your eyes retain focus on a printed page - but characters on a computer screen present other challenges to our eyes.

Characters on a computer screen don't have the same contrast and clarity found in most printed materials. While print characters are well-defined, dense and black, and contrast with their light background, those on a computer screen are brightest at their centers and diminish in intensity toward their edges. It is difficult for our eyes to maintain focus on such characters, and the effort of constant focus shift produces symptoms including fatigue, headaches, dry eyes, and irritability.



How to reduce eyestrain related to computer use? Here are some tips:

- **Modify your workstation.** Ambient lighting should not be too bright, and glare on the screen should be avoided. If you wear glasses, they should have an anti-reflective coating.
- **Blink more often, take frequent breaks and refocus your eyes.** We like the 20-20-20 rule: Look away from your screen every 20 minutes and focus for 20 seconds on an object at least 20 feet away.
- **Discuss your computer use during your eye exam.** The doctor will certainly want to consider it when prescribing corrective lenses. New technology in computer-specific glasses may be a solution for you, and prescription eye drops can alleviate dry eyes.

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Do you have a friend or loved one who is battling breast cancer, who is a survivor or a victim of the disease? October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and we plan to donate \$500 for research to Susan G. Komen. Drop by our office and lend a hand to this effort by putting a note into our "Heroes" jar. We hope to collect 100 names this month (first names are fine),

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