

What You Can Do About Eyestrain

In today's office environment, employees spend more than 50% of the workday sitting at a desk. A common complaint from these workers includes eyestrain. The eyestrain could be caused by the widespread use of computers and flat screen monitors. Several common symptoms experienced by the flat screen monitor users include eye soreness, headaches, dry, itching or burning eyes and blurred vision. Fortunately, there are ways to adapt the work environment to make it less stressful on your eyes.

Vision Tips

Here are some ways to help reduce eyestrain and prevent more serious vision problems:

- To reduce glare, position your flat screen monitor so neither you nor the screen faces a window. If necessary, use a hood or glare-reduction screen.
- To lessen strain on eye muscles, keep your flat screen monitor 18 to 28 inches from your eyes, and no higher than eye level when you are seated in your chair. If you use a document holder, keep it at the same height as your screen.
- Use dimmer lighting around your flat screen monitor. Dim lighting reduces glare and makes the screen easier to read.
- Adjust the screen's brightness and contrast controls for your best comfort.
- If your screen has color options, choose those easiest on your eyes.

Take a Break

One of the best things you can do for your eyes when working on flat screen monitors or in other eye-straining situations is to take short breaks. Simple one-minute eye exercises done every 20 minutes can reduce eye fatigue.

- Change focus by glancing across the room or look out the window and focus on objects at least 20 feet away. Then, lightly cup your eyes with your palms, and relax for 60 seconds
- Look away from the screen, and roll your eyes up and down, around and side to side.

Eye Exams

If you experience chronic eye problems, have your eyes examined by an eye care professional. If you work on a flat screen monitor, be sure to tell the doctor. Anyone who works regularly on flat screen monitors should have annual eye exams, and people over age 40 may need more frequent checkups.