

newsworthy trends

Computer Vision Syndrome: What You Should Know

(NAPSA)—If you are a frequent computer user and have ever noticed your eyes feeling dry or strained, or your vision is a little blurred after working on the computer, you are not alone. These are all symptoms of Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), a recognized condition that can result from long hours staring at a computer screen. According to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), as of 2001, 174 million people, or 65.6 percent of the U.S. population, were computer users.

Symptoms

Other common symptoms of CVS, in addition to dry eyes, blurred vision and eyestrain, include headaches, a burning sensation in the eye and an increase in the number of typographical errors in the afternoon.

How To Ease Computer Vision Syndrome Symptoms

There are several ways to help reduce or eliminate the symptoms of CVS that are both simple and inexpensive, including:

- Checking the position of your computer screen—the center of the screen should be four to nine inches below your eyes.

- Blinking more often—blinking rewets your eyes and helps reduce dryness and irritation. When working on a computer, people have a tendency to blink less, so make it a conscious effort.

- Using a lubricating eye-drop—also called artificial tears, these drops help moisturize eyes, especially if they are feeling dry or scratchy. For instance, GenTeal®

artificial tears are made specifically to lubricate the eyes and minimize the irritation caused by dryness, as well as protect against further irritation.

- Taking frequent breaks from staring at the computer—try refocusing your eyes on an object across the room or outside your window every 20 minutes for 20 seconds to give your eyes a break.

- Adjusting the computer screen brightness—a good rule of thumb is that the brightness of the computer screen should match the general background brightness of the room.

- Eliminating glare on your computer screen—you may want to install an anti-glare screen on your computer screen. Repositioning your workstation may also help eliminate glare. For instance, windows should be to your side to reduce glare on the screen.

- Increasing your font size—increase the font size until you are able to read the document without squinting or straining your eyes.

About Lubricating Eyedrops

Lubricating eyedrops, also called artificial tears, are available without a prescription in most major drugstores. Unlike eyedrops that are designed to reduce redness, artificial tears are made specifically to lubricate the eyes and minimize the irritation caused by dryness, as well as protect against further irritation.

To learn more about Computer Vision Syndrome, visit the American Optometric Association Web site at www.aoa.org. For more information about GenTeal® artificial tears, visit www.genteal.com.