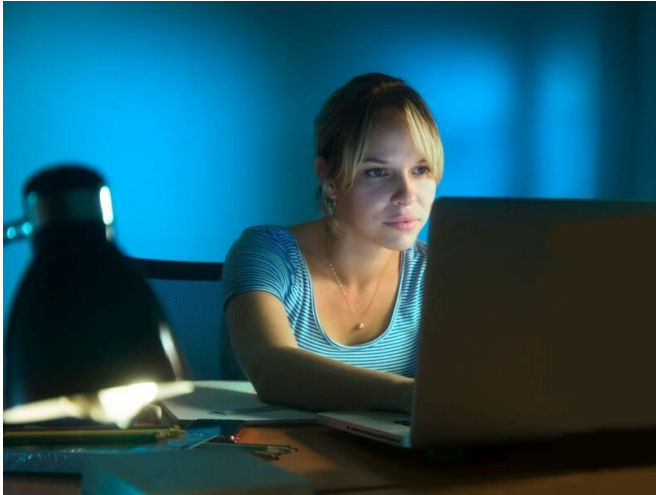


Eye care is key when you're working from home

29 March 2021



If you're one of the many people who've switched to working at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, you need to take care of your eyes, the American Academy of Ophthalmology says.

Staring at a screen too long can lead to digital eye strain. Symptoms include blurry vision, headaches and tired, dry eyes. It happens because we blink less often when using screens. Blinking keeps the surface of the eye moisturized.

Extended reading, writing or other intensive near-work can also cause eye strain.

"The good news is that looking at a [computer](#), tablet or smartphone for long periods of time will not cause [permanent damage](#)," said Dr. Dianna Seldomridge, clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO).

"As we've all experienced, staring at a screen for too long can cause some uncomfortable symptoms. But there are some simple changes

you can make to ease the discomfort," she said in an academy news release.

Take regular eye breaks by following the 20-20-20 rule. Set a timer on your phone or watch to remind you to look 20-feet away every 20 minutes for 20 seconds. Or you can close your eyes for 20 seconds.

You should sit 18 to 25 inches away from your [computer screen](#), about arm's length. Adjust screen brightness and contrast so that it feels comfortable. Position the screen so your eyes gaze slightly downward, not straight ahead or up, Seldomridge advised.

Eye drops ("artificial tears") will help keep your eyes moist and relieve the discomfort of dry eye.

Alternatively, a humidifier will add moisture to the air and minimize dry eye. This is especially good for people in cold regions who use heaters often, she noted.

If you have trouble seeing your screen, ask your doctor about computer glasses that have progressive lenses specifically designed for focusing on computer screens.

Don't bother with [blue light](#)-blocking glasses because there is no [scientific evidence](#) that blue light coming from a computer screen causes digital eye strain or damages the eye, according to the AAO.

More information: The U.S. National Eye Institute has more [eye health tips](#).

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APA citation: Eye care is key when you're working from home (2021, March 29) retrieved 11 October 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-03-eye-key-youre-home.html>

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