



Tips to Combat Digital Eye Strain

Computers, smart phones, e-readers, and tablets have all become a part of normal day-to-day life, but digital screens affect your eyes differently than printed material.¹

Digital eye strain (DES) is common in people who use digital devices for long periods of time. However, some people are more sensitive and using devices for as little as two hours is enough to cause problems.²

In adults, the prevalence of eye strain is around 65%, and approximately 50-60% of children are affected.² Digital eye strain in children has been linked to the faster progression of nearsightedness (myopia).²

Symptoms of eye strain commonly include:

- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Stiff neck
- Light sensitivity
- Dry eyes
- Neck and shoulder pain

To reduce your risk of DES, try these strategies:

- **Reduce screen time.** Scaling back your screen time is the simplest way to reduce eye strain. Experts recommend aiming for less than 4 hours of screen time each day.²

- **Adjust lighting.** Poorly lit workspaces can make DES worse, so make lighting adjustments as needed. Increasing text font size to at least 12 and adjusting the contrast of your monitor to around 60-70% can also help.¹
- **Reduce screen glare.** Screen glare filters and blue-light filtering glasses with antireflective coating help cut down on glare.
- **Optimize viewing distances.** Ideally, your device screen should be about 15-20 degrees below eye level (4 or 5 inches) and 20-28 inches away from your eyes.¹
- **Use the 20-20-20 rule:** When using a digital device, take periodic breaks. Every 20 minutes look 20 feet away for 20 seconds and allow your eyes to refocus.

Uncorrected vision problems can make your eyes work harder. If you continue to experience symptoms of eye strain despite trying methods like the ones above, schedule an appointment for an eye exam. Getting an annual vision exam can also help you identify and correct vision problems before they create long-term problems.

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1. American Optometric Association (AOA). [Computer vision syndrome](#). Accessed Sept 8, 2023.

2. Kaur K, Gurnani B, Nayak S, Deori N, Kaur S, Jethani J, Singh D, Agarkar S, Hussaindeen JR, Sukhija J, Mishra D. Digital Eye Strain- A Comprehensive Review. *Ophthalmol Ther*. 2022 Oct;11(5):1655-1680. doi: 10.1007/s40123-022-00540-9. Epub 2022 Jul 9. PMID: 35809192; PMCID: PMC9434525.

3. Cleveland Clinic. [Eye Strain](#). Last reviewed Jul 2023. Accessed Sept 12, 2023.