

Screens are everywhere: Resolve to protect your vision

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Screens are everywhere—on desks, in laps, on the wall—and eye strain

is a temporary but uncomfortable condition that comes with overuse.

Folks spending too much time with screens can develop [dry eyes](#), blurry vision, tearing or watering eyes, or a headache, warns the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO).

That's because humans tend to blink less while staring at these devices, the AAO says.

People normally blink around 15 times per minute, but this blink rate can be cut in half while staring at screens, the academy says.

To reduce [eye strain](#), the AAO recommends taking frequent breaks along the lines of the "20-20-20" rule.

Every 20 minutes, look away from your screen and instead look at an object 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. This gives your eyes a chance to reset.

People can also:

- Use artificial tears to lubricate eyes when they feel dry.
- Sit arm's length from your screen and adjust its height so you're looking slightly downward at it.
- Apply a matte screen filter to reduce glare from glass screens.
- Adjust brightness and contrast of your screen, and dim lighting near the screen.
- Wear eyeglasses rather than [contact lenses](#) when working on a computer or tablet for longer periods.

The AAO notes that blue light from computers have not been shown to increase risk of eye disease.

"It is true that overexposure to blue light and UV light rays from the sun can raise the risk of eye disease, but the small amount of blue light coming from computer screens has never been shown to harm your eyes," said Daniel Porter, a patient education coordinator at the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

The evidence so far has shown no meaningful link between the blue light from screens and damage to retinas or age-related macular degeneration, Porter said.

Further, [blue light](#) doesn't contribute to the eye strain associated with [screen use](#), so it's not necessary to spend money on special "blue-blocking" glasses to wear while using the devices, Porter said.

More information: Harvard Medical School has more about [screens and vision](#).

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