

## Protect your Specs from Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)

**Computer Vision Syndrome is the name for eye problems caused by computer use. CVS is not one specific eye problem. Instead, the term encompasses a whole range of eyestrain and pain experienced by computer users. Research shows computer eye problems are common. Somewhere between 50% and 90% of people who work at a video display terminal -- computer screen -- have at least some symptoms of eye trouble.**

Making a few simple changes in your work environment can help prevent and improve computer vision symptoms:

- **Cut the glare.** Change the lighting around you to reduce glare on your computer screen. If a nearby window is casting glare on your screen, move the monitor and close the shades until the glare disappears. Ask your employer to install a dimmer switch for the overhead lights if they're too bright, or buy a desk lamp with a moveable shade that distributes light evenly over your desk. Putting a glare filter over your monitor also can help protect your eyes.
- **Rearrange your desk.** Researchers find that the optimal position for your computer monitor is slightly below eye level, about 20 to 28 inches away from your face. At that position, you shouldn't have to stretch your neck or strain your eyes to see what's on the screen. Put a stand next to your computer monitor and place any printed materials you're working from on it. Then, you won't have to look up at your screen and back down at your desk while you type.
- **Give your eyes a break.** Look away from the screen every 20 minutes or so and either gaze out the window or scan the room for about 20 seconds to rest your eyes. Blink often to keep your eyes moist. If your eyes are getting overly dry, try using lubricating eyedrops.
- **Tweak your computer settings.** You don't have to live with the factory-installed settings on your computer if you're uncomfortable. Adjust the brightness, contrast, and font size until you find the best settings for your vision.

**Also Important:** Visit your eye doctor regularly for an exam. Let the doctor know about any eyestrain or other problems you're experiencing at work. You may need glasses or contact lenses to correct your computer eye problems. The ophthalmologist will help determine whether you can just wear your regular glasses or you need special computer glasses.

*(Information courtesy of WebMD Medical Reference)*