

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

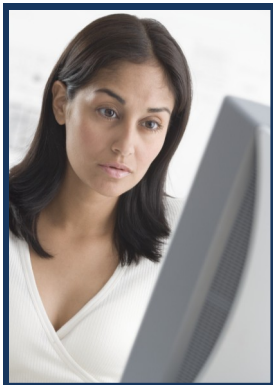
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HELP AVOID COMPUTER-RELATED EYESTRAIN

As workplace computer use continues to grow, the problem of computer-related eyestrain has come into focus. Below is a checklist of work station adjustments and safe work practices to help reduce eyestrain risk.

Avoiding Eyestrain Checklist

1. **Position the computer monitor between 20 and 40 inches from the eyes.** If your eyeglass prescription doesn't allow clear vision at this recommended distance you should look into a prescription adjustment.
2. **Set the screen height so the top edge is even with your view when looking straight ahead.** Then, tilt the screen upward to avoid having to view the screen image at an angle. The optimal screen position is 10 to 20 degrees below eye level.
3. **Set monitor screen resolution, text size, and zoom and font defaults so that the picture does not show signs of stretching, blurring, or distortion.** The optimum resolution may vary depending upon the application.
4. **Reduce mouse cursor speed (if possible).** Slower movement will lessen the strain it takes to focus on a quickly moving mouse cursor.
5. **At least every 15 or 20 minutes, look away from the computer monitor for about 30 seconds.** Gaze at or scan things at least 20 feet away to allow your eyes to focus in rest position.



6. **Blink often when working in front of a computer. Reduced blinking can cause the eye lens to dry out.** While the average blink rate is 22 times per minute, blinking slows down to 7 times per minute when an individual is looking at a computer monitor. If you can't get in the habit of blinking more often use an eye moistener.

7. **Cover your eyes with your palms for a minute or so every half hour, to help warm and relax the muscles around the eyes.**



Do not use a computer in a dark or dimly lit room, it increases eyestrain.

8. **Minimize glare by ensuring that the background light level around the monitor is about the same as the screen light level.** And, minimize direct sunlight or bright lights in front of the monitor or directly behind it. You can attach a glare shield to help correct problems.

9. **Adjust contrast and brightness to similar levels you would use when reading a book comfortably.**

10. **Place a paper holder at the same level as the monitor, or attach it to the monitor, to hold documents.** This helps prevent repetitive upper body and eye movement from paper to screen, which can cause eyestrain.

11. **Please secondary monitor, or paperwork, by your dominant eye.** If your right eye is dominant (strongest), place your second monitor or documents to the right; or to the left for a left dominant eye.

Sources

"Checklist: Help Employees Avoid Computer-Related Eyestrain." *Cal/OSHA Compliance Advisor*. Cal/OSHA Compliance Advisor, n.d. Web. 15 Nov 2012. <<http://www.ca-safety.com/members/569.cfm>>.

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