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Combating Eye Strain from Remote Work

The Vision Council reported that more than 70% of Americans don't know, or don't believe, that they could suffer from eye strain. The reality is that most adults are on digital media for about four to six hours each day. If your job involves working on a computer and you've been logging on from home, you may be racking up even more hours than normal in front of a brightly lit screen.

Symptoms of Eye Strain

Eye fatigue is caused by staring at screens for long periods of time. According to the Mayo Clinic, you may have eye strain if you have:

- Sore, tired, burning or itching eyes
- Watery eyes
- Dry eyes
- Blurred or double vision
- Increased sensitivity to light
- Difficulty focusing

Combating Eye Strain

The simple solution to eye strain is to limit the time you spend in front of screens. That can be especially tough if working at a computer is part of your job. The same goes for children who may be virtually learning and using devices to stay connected to school.

It comes down to being mindful about how you are interacting with screens throughout the day. Even if you are a computer-bound worker, eye strain is preventable and mitigable. Here are ways to help reduce eye strain:

- **Reduce glare.** Try turning down your monitor's brightness and cleaning the screen regularly. Dust can increase glare.
- **Dim lighting.** If possible, dim any other competing light in the room. You may be craving natural light, but try to configure your workspace away from front- or back-facing windows. If that's not possible, consider applying a removable anti-glare filter on the screen to reduce sunlight glare.
- **Pay attention to ergonomics.** Place your screen in front of your face, just below eye level. Additionally, keep the monitor an arm's length away.
- **Increase font size.** If you feel your eyes straining to read, increase on-screen text size.
- **Wear computer glasses.** Blue-light-blocking computer glasses are designed to filter the light from your screen, which can help reduce eye strain. When blue light enters the eye, it scatters, and the eye perceives it as glare. As a result, the eye works harder to keep vision clear and focused, which causes strain.
- **Blink regularly.** This is a simple one, but your eyes may feel dry just because you're staring and have forgotten to blink. In fact, blue light exposure can cause people to stop blinking while using screens.
- **Practice the 20-20-20 rule.** If possible, look away from your screen every 20 minutes at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.

If you are experiencing symptoms of eye strain and at-home adjustments aren't working, consult with your eye doctor. This is especially important if you're experiencing prolonged discomfort or vision changes.

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