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Prevent Blindness Warns Increased Screen Time in the Workplace Can Cause Vision Problems

CHICAGO (Feb. 24, 2015) – Computers, tablets and smartphones are necessary devices in many workplaces today. With the increase in screen time, at work or leisure, the risk of digital eye strain also increases.

According to a recent report from [The Vision Council](#), more than 60 percent of adults spend five or more hours on digital devices each day. In addition, the report states that office workers who spend significant time in front of computer screens experience eye strain and undergo changes in tear fluid similar to people with dry eye disease.

[WebMD](#) states that “Computer Vision Syndrome” affects between 50-90 percent of computer workers because a computer screen adds the elements of screen contrast, flicker, and glare. And, computer eye problems are more likely to occur in those that already have an eye problem, such as nearsightedness or astigmatism. Computer vision syndrome symptoms may include blurred or double vision, dry, red eyes, eye irritation, headaches and neck or back pain.

Prevent Blindness, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety group, has declared March Workplace Eye Wellness Month to provide employers and employees with free information on topics ranging from eye strain to [industrial eye safety](#) in order to promote eye health at work.

“The use of digital technology has become part of daily life for so many of us,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “It is important to be mindful of the effects that increased exposure to screens and blue light can have on our eyes. By being vigilant about protecting our vision now, we can help keep our eyes healthy in the future.”

Prevent Blindness suggests these steps to help prevent eyestrain and fatigue:

- Visit an eye doctor for a dilated eye exam to make sure you are seeing clearly and to detect any potential vision issues.
- Place your screen 20 to 26 inches away from your eyes and a little bit below eye level.

- Use a document holder placed next to your computer screen. It should be close enough so you don't have to swing your head back and forth or constantly change your eye focus.
- Adjust the text size on the screen to a comfortable level.
- Change your lighting to lower glare and harsh reflections. Glare filters over your computer screen can also help.
- Use a chair that is adjustable.
- Choose screens that can tilt and swivel. A keyboard that you can adjust is also helpful.
- The Vision Council recommends the 20-20-20 break: every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break and look at something 20 feet away.
- Dust and wipe digital screens to help reduce glare.

Prevent Blindness also offers a Work Safety module as part of its free program, the [Healthy Eyes Educational Series](#). Each module in the series includes a Presentation Guide and corresponding PowerPoint presentation on a relevant eye health topic such as adult eye disorders, eye anatomy, healthy living, low vision and various safety topics. Fact sheets can be downloaded at any time from the Prevent Blindness website for use as handouts to accompany the presentation.

To find out more about the Healthy Eyes Educational Series or other workplace eye health topics, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020 or visit preventblindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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