Computer Vision Syndrome

Sitting at a computer generally causes a person to look straight ahead for long stretches, work in a dry office or home environment, and to blink less often. These factors can lead to vision problems. Additionally, computer use requires specific vision skills, which add further demands to the visual system and contribute to eye and vision discomfort. These skills include:

Ocular motility — the ability of the eyes to move in various positions.
Accommodation — the ability of the eyes to focus clearly at various distances.
Vergence — The ability to move the eyes in (convergence) or out (divergence).

Computer work places various demands on the visual system. Each of these factors can play a part in computer vision syndrome.

Screen resolution — Better resolution offers greater clarity and usually leads to improved comfort. Adjust the resolution to the highest resolution your monitor will support.
Screen contrast — Adjust the contrast between the characters on the monitor and the background so the letters are easily read. Adjust the brightness of the monitor to an intensity that is comfortable to your eyes--not too bright and not too dim. Adjust both brightness and contrast for the best clarity.
Screen glare and reflections — Minimize reflected glare on your monitor by using window treatments, dimmer switches on lights and glare reduction filters. Look for glare reduction filters that have received the American Optometric Association Seal of Acceptance. Proper adjustment should eliminate any reflected images from the monitor screen. To reduce glare, eliminate bright light sources from your peripheral vision and position your monitor perpendicular to windows or other bright light sources.
Image refresh rates and flicker — A higher refresh rate for your monitor is best. The image on the screen should not flicker at all. (This is not a concern with LCDs.)
**Working distances and angles** — It is important to work at a distance that is comfortable for you and where the image on the screen is clear.
General eyeglass prescription may not be adequate — Computers are usually further and higher than a typical reading task. Glasses for most people wearing bifocals are not adjusted for this new distance or angle and therefore often are not adequate for using the computer.
Repetitive and stressful tasks — Difficult tasks are challenging. Don't forget to take occasional breaks and let the eyes look far away while resting.

Have a regular comprehensive eye exam to ensure your eyes are healthy and that you have the correct eyeglass or contact lens prescription (if necessary). Be certain to tell your optometrist about the computer work you do.

If you would like more information, please contact
Med-Cert, Inc. at 866-633-2378 (toll free) or at www.medcertinc.com
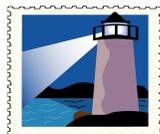
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