Illinois Center for Injury Prevention

Computer Vision Syndrome

What is Computer Vision Syndrome?

Over 2 million people in Illinois have jobs that require a significant amount of computer use; that is about 1/3 of workers in Illinois. With computers becoming ubiquitous there is an increase in prevalence for an associated ocular disorder called Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS). The American Optometric Association reports that 75% of people working on computers report experiencing symptoms of CVS, especially people with uncorrected visual impairments. CVS is caused by long periods of computer use, which results in fatigue to both the ocular muscles that are responsible for visual accommodation and muscles involved in eye movement. This fatigue causes blurriness and/or double vision, and is not something the ocular muscles learn to compensate for; therefore it tends to worsen with time. Pain or a burning sensation in the eye can also occur that is likely due to dryness from staring at the computer screen and blinking less often. In addition to visual fatigue and pain, musculoskeletal strain can occur from prolonged posture while working on a computer, usually resulting in neck or back pain.

Key Point

- CVS causes temporary symptoms of pain and discomfort to both ocular and skeletal muscles that subside after ending computer use, but resume once computer use begins again.

Symptoms:

Blurred Vision   Double Vision

Dry Eyes   Burning Eyes

Headache   Neck or Back Pain

General Ocular Discomfort

Prevention Measures:

- Take regular breaks-look away from computer
- Adjust your computer screen and workstation
- Reduce glare on the computer screen
- Adjust the brightness on the computer screen
- Get eye exams regularly

Factsheet By: Hannah Matzke