

Sight Matters

FAQ Sheets

Computers & Your Eyes

Computer-Related Eyestrain

Computers are the “normal” situation in most workplaces and they are certainly common in most homes.

However, more than 50% of computer operators experience eyestrain, headaches and blurred vision?



More than 50% have computer eyestrain

These problems occur along with other visual symptoms related to the increase of sustained near point visual stress that is associated with the use of computer screens. Visual stress can also magnify complaints of general body fatigue; reduce work efficiency and increase the error rates as the day progresses.

Relieving Visual Stress

Most of these symptoms can be alleviated through a combination of correcting the workstation conditions and using stress relieving lenses prescribed specifically for computer operation. In some cases the situation is also relieved by improving visual skills with visual training.

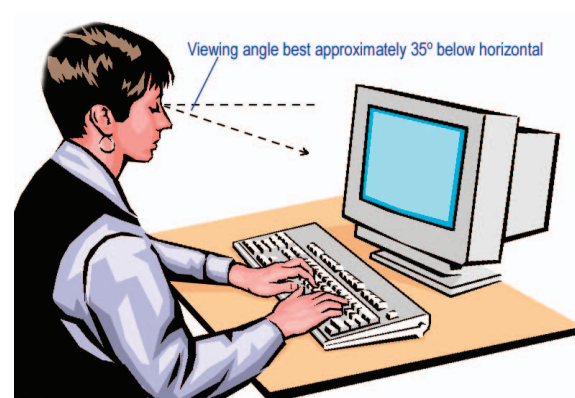
Ergonomics of the Workstation

The workstation can often be improved by lowering the height of the screen, or raising the height of the user.

The top of the screen should be about 10 degrees below the user's straight ahead sight line and the viewing distance from eyes to screen should be between 35 and 50 cms (between 14 and 20 inches).

Documents that are being used should be placed as close as possible to the computer screen, perhaps on a document holder. This will minimise tiring large movements by the eyes and head.

Rest breaks are also important; and glancing away from the screen every few minutes will also make the work more comfortable.



The preferred position is to be looking down by about 35°

Conclusion

Computer-related eyestrain is a significant problem for many people who spend long hours in front of a computer screen each day.

Sometimes this can be solved by simply rearranging the setup of the work situation, thus improving the ergonomics. In other cases your optometrist may need to prescribe computer spectacles that have been designed for the computer working distance - this is usually further away than normal reading tasks.