



Occidental College Wellness Newsletter

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Digital Eye Strain

Irritated, dry eyes may be signs that you have digital eye strain. Digital eye strain, also called computer vision syndrome, is a condition that often affects people who work or play on laptops, tablets, smartphones, e-readers, and other digital devices. Regardless of your computer usage, you may be at risk for developing this condition.

What are the Symptoms of Digital Eye Strain:

- Pain in your eyes and eye muscles
- Blurred vision
- Irritated, dry eyes
- Eye fatigue
- Headaches
- Muscle Stiffness in your neck and shoulders

The condition occurs in both children and adults who view digital screens. Approximately 59% of people who use digital devices report digital eye strain symptoms according to The Vision Council.

You may not notice a difference between reading words on a printed page versus a digital screen, but your eyes certainly do. The letters you see on your screen aren't as crisp and sharp as those you read in a book, which forces your eyes to work harder to focus. Glare, a common problem when viewing digital devices, worsens the problem, as does poor contrast.

The following can also be factors in digital eye strain:

- The position of your chair or how you sit – if you are too close or too far from the screen, or the angle.
- Dry eye decreases the sharpness of your vision and can be a result of reduced blinking.

What can be done about digital eye strain?

1. Schedule an eye exam and possibly update your eyeglass or contact lens prescription.
2. Wear computer glasses which enhance sharp vision at 20-28 inches, the typical distance from your screen.
3. Improve ergonomics. Position your desk/chair for optimal viewing. It is recommended looking downward on the screen and 4-5 inches below eye level.
4. Add a filter to your device that will help decrease glare.
5. Improve lighting. Lighting should be bright enough to allow you to see the screen easily without casting too much glare. Consider a desk lamp instead of overhead lights.
6. Blink more often. While on a screen people blink 1/3 as often.
7. Follow the 20-20-20 rule. After viewing a screen for 20 minutes, look at an object 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.
8. Take screen breaks after two to three hours in front of a screen and step away for 10 minutes.
9. If dry eyes continue to be a problem, use artificial tear drops.
10. Change screen brightness. Your eyes must work harder to see clearly if your screen is darker or lighter than your surroundings. Your screen should mimic the light level of the room.

10 Essential Tips for Summer Eye Protection and Avoid Infection:

1. Choose sunglasses with full UV protection.
2. Pay attention to the lenses type. Wrap-around styles can provide better summer eye protection.
3. Buy sunglasses from a reputable retailer.
4. Always wear a hat when outside to provide additional protection.
5. Always wear swim goggles to minimize infection.
6. Do not swim while wearing contact lenses.
7. Choose the right eye protection for your sport.
8. Be careful when working around the house.
9. Avoid indoor tanning beds.
10. Wash your hands frequently.

What Is Hearing Loss?

Hearing loss is very common and there are different types of hearing loss:

1. Temporary hearing loss can happen when your ears are plugged with fluid behind the ear drum.
2. Sensorineural hearing loss is nerve-related hearing loss and is usually permanent. Almost all types of sensorineural hearing loss are the functional deterioration of the hair cells in your inner ear.
 - a. The hair cells are the end part of the inner ear that take the mechanical sound and turn it into electrical sound. We either have fewer hair cells or they are less functional.
 - b. The most common of this type of hearing loss is age and history of loud noise exposure.
 - c. Hearing aids help to increase the volume for better hearing.
 - d. For those with profound hearing loss, cochlear implants work by bypassing the hair cells and sending signals directly to the hearing nerve and brain.

Once health care professionals figure out your type of hearing loss, they can tailor treatment that is best for you.

Recipe Feature

Maple-Thyme Chicken Thighs

Prep/Total Time: 15 minutes

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp stone-ground mustard
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp minced fresh thyme or ½ tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, mix the first five ingredients. Moisten a paper towel with cooking oil and with tongs rub on grill rack to coat lightly.
2. Grill chicken, covered, over medium heat 4-5 minutes on each side or until a thermometer reads 170°F. Brush frequently with mustard mixture during the last 4 minutes of cooking.

Nutrition Facts:

- 1 serving = 1 chicken thigh
- 188 calories
- 9 g fat (2 g saturated fat)
- 76 mg cholesterol
- 363 mg sodium
- 5 g carbohydrate
- 5 g sugar
- 21 g protein

