



## Wellness Matters



### SUMMIT ESC's WELLNESS PROGRAM

Energize, Socialize, Come Alive!

## March 2020

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### March Focus- Workplace Eye Health

March is Workplace Eye Health and Safety Month. Before you think that this topic does not apply to you, think again. Each day, over 2,000 Americans suffer an eye injury. This means that almost one million Americans have experienced some vision loss due to eye injury, which has resulted in more than \$300 million in lost work time, medical expenses and workman's compensation.

We usually think of work-related eye injuries as being isolated to outdoor jobs such as construction work, landscaping or animal handling. Ironically, working in

an office can be just as hazardous to your eyesight. The most common eye problem is computer vision syndrome. While consistently being on your computer will not permanently damage your vision, it can make your eyes feel irritated and fatigued. Computer vision syndrome is not just a myth. Too much screen time and not enough breaks can cause headaches, inattentiveness, neck pain, back strain, and dry eye. Studies show that staring at a screen for extended periods of time lengthens the interval between blinks, preventing eyes from staying lubricated and moistened.

There are some ways to prevent computer vision syndrome and keep your eyes feeling comfortable:

1. **Re-position your screen.** Adjust your screen to be at a right angle away from any direct light source. Invest in an anti-glare screen for your monitor to make computer work gentler on your eyes.
2. **Remember the 20-20-20 rule.** This rule reminds you that every 20 minutes, you should look at an object at least 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds.
3. **Don't forget to blink.** While it may sound ridiculous, write yourself a note and place it on your monitor. Write "Blink Often" or any other message that will remind you to regularly close your eyes to keep them from getting dried out.
4. **Use artificial tears.** Over-the-counter eye drops can be extremely helpful in preventing dry eye and keeping your eyes comfortable.
5. **Drink water.** Adequate hydration can make a big difference, especially during the winter months when heaters and furnaces can make the air particularly dry.
6. **Schedule regular comprehensive eye exams.** Nothing can replace the importance of having an eye exam by a licensed ophthalmologist at regular intervals. If you have any concerns about your vision or experience any changes with your eyesight, do not delay in making an appointment.

Adapted from: <https://yoursightmatters.com/march-is-workplace-eye-wellness-month/>

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## Three Easy Eye Stretches to Alleviate Tech Strain and Tension Headaches

Like all muscles in the body, the small muscles of the eyes can become tired from overuse. The eyes can especially suffer from some stress if you're sitting in an office or looking at a screen all day. These three stretches can offer relief and can have a very soothing effect on tension-derived headaches. Do not overexert or hold these positions for too long—repeating just once or twice should be sufficient.

### Eye Stretch:

- Begin by looking straight ahead. Then look up, down, left, and right in that order.
- Hold each stationary position for the duration of a breath—for example: inhale and look up; exhale and look down.

- Next, make half-circle motions, arcing toward the forehead first, followed by half circles in the direction of the feet. Alternate the breaths for the half circles as you go back and forth so that you inhale in one direction and exhale on the way back.

#### **Looking Into the Distance:**

- Stand or sit looking out of a window. Focus your eyes on a point in the distance. The objective is to engage the muscles that focus the eyes.
- Sometimes focusing on a specific point can feel strenuous. If this is the case, looking at a general landscape far away can be enough to engage the muscles in the eyes and will suffice.
- Tip: If you are not by a window, then find a point in the room that is in the distance.

#### **Around the Eyes:**

- Press the pads of the fingers on your temples and gently pull the skin back toward the hairline.
- Next, with your eyes closed, press the pads of the fingers just beneath the eyebrows and gently press them toward the forehead. Finally, press the pads of the fingers into the skin just below the cheekbones.
- Keeping your head in a neutral position, look up toward the forehead while you pull down on the skin beneath the fingers.
- Tip: Making small circles with your fingers as you apply pressure can be very soothing.

Adapted from: <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/3-eye-stretches-you-can-do-at-your-desk>

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## **Keep Your Eyes Safe at Work**

Safety experts and eye doctors believe the right eye protection can lessen the severity or even prevent 90 percent of these eye injuries.

Chemicals or foreign objects in the eye and cuts or scrapes on the cornea are common eye injuries that occur at work. Other common eye injuries come from splashes with grease and oil, burns from steam, ultraviolet or infrared radiation exposure, and flying wood or metal chips.

In addition, health care workers, laboratory and janitorial staff, and other workers may be at risk of acquiring infectious diseases from eye exposure. Some infectious diseases can be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eye. This can occur through direct exposure to blood splashes, respiratory droplets generated during coughing, or from touching the eyes with contaminated fingers or other objects.

Workers experience eye injuries on the job for two major reasons:

1. They were not wearing eye protection.
2. They were wearing the wrong kind of protection for the job.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics survey of workers who suffered eye injuries revealed that nearly three out of five were not wearing eye protection at the time of the accident. These workers most often reported that they believed protection was not required for the situation.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires workers to use eye and face protection whenever there is a reasonable probability of injury that could be prevented by such equipment. Personal protective eye wear, such as goggles, face shields, safety glasses or full face respirators must be used when an eye hazard exists. The necessary eye protection depends upon the type of hazard, the circumstances of exposure, other protective equipment used and individual vision needs.

[Click here for more information on keeping your eyes healthy and safe.](#)

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## Eye-Healthy Recipes

- [Infused Water](#)
- [Creamy Orange-Cherry Oatmeal](#)
- [Farro Breakfast Bowl](#)
- [Chicken chopped Salad](#)
- [Greek Tomato Salad](#)
- [Penne with Chicken, Arugula, Spicy Roasted Tomatoes And Feta](#)
- [Turkey Burgers with Roasted Orange Peppers](#)
- [Roasted Salmon With Melon Salsa](#)
- [Creamy Herb Hummus with Sliced Bell Peppers, Broccoli Florets and Whole Wheat Pita Wedges](#)
- [Easy Almond Cookies](#)
- [Plum Blackberry Crumble](#)

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