Reducing the Symptoms of CVS

Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) is a set of symptoms including discomfort from glare, dry eye, headaches, loss of focus, burning eyes, eye fatigue, blurred vision, and neck/shoulder pain related to computer use. CVS affects 70% of children and adults who work on a computer on a daily basis.

Some important factors in preventing or reducing the symptoms of CVS have to do with the computer and how it is used. This includes lighting conditions, chair comfort, location of reference materials, position of the monitor, and the use of rest breaks.

Using the correct prescription – The best type of lenses for computer glasses usually depends on your age. If you are in your 40s or older, it's likely you have some degree of presbyopia. If so, multifocal lenses will usually be your best choice because they provide better depth of focus than single vision lenses. This will let you see your computer screen clearly and also see objects that are closer and farther away than your computer. Single vision lenses can also be a good solution for computer glasses, though your depth of focus will be more limited with these lenses if you are presbyopic. Your eye doctor will help you decide whether multifocal or single vision lenses are the best solution for your work environment and your visual needs.

Anti-glare screens/Non-glare Anti-Reflective (AR) coatings - If there is no way to minimize glare from light sources, consider using a screen glare filter. These filters decrease the amount of light reflected from the screen. AR coatings on spectacles filter reflected light on the front and rear surfaces of your glasses, before the light enters the eye.

Blinking/Use of Tear Substitutes - To minimize your chances of developing dry eye when using a computer, make an effort to blink frequently. Blinking keeps the front surface of your eye moist. Your doctor can recommend the right artificial tear substitute for you to use.

Location of computer screen - Most people find it more comfortable to view a computer when the eyes are looking downward. Optimally, the computer screen should be 15 to 20 degrees below eye level (about 4 or 5 inches) as measured from the center of the screen and 20 to 28 inches from the eyes.

Reference materials - These materials should be located above the keyboard and below the monitor. If this is not possible, a document holder can be used beside the monitor. The goal is to position the documents so you do not need to move your head to look from the document to the screen.

Lighting - Position the computer screen to avoid glare, particularly from overhead lighting or windows. Use blinds or drapes on windows and replace the light bulbs in desk lamps with bulbs of lower wattage.

Seating position - Chairs should be comfortably padded and conform to the body. Chair height should be adjusted so your feet rest flat on the floor. If your chair has arms, they should be adjusted to provide arm support while you are typing. Your wrists shouldn't rest on the keyboard when typing.

Rest breaks - To prevent eyestrain, try to rest your eyes when using the computer for long periods. Rest your eyes for 15 minutes after two hours of continuous computer use. Also, for every 20 minutes of computer viewing, look into the distance for 20 seconds to allow your eyes a chance to refocus.

Regular eye examinations and proper viewing habits can help to prevent or reduce the development of the symptoms associated with Computer Vision Syndrome.

http://www.aoa.org/x5253.xml

http://www.allaboutvision.com/cvs/faqs.htm

http://www.allaboutvision.com/cvs/irritated.htm#glare