



## Eye Health at Work

Optometric Association notes that up to 75 percent of all computer users have had eye and vision problems related to computer use at work. Eyestrain and resulting headaches have been found to reduce accuracy and productivity.

As OHSU relies more on computers every day, you must remember to take care of your eyes. While everyone is different, the following suggestions can help maximize your comfort at work:

**Prescription lenses** - Even if you don't usually use glasses at home, a pair for computing can reduce vision stress. These can be quite inexpensive.

**Glasses that work for the job** - Different prescriptions may be needed for specific types of work, even for those who already require and wear prescription lenses. Some people wear bifocal or progressive lenses to address this, but these don't always work well due to a lower focal path.

**Take your breaks** - These are provided for you to get up and away from your work. You should at least do something different for a while to allow your eyes to rest.

**Reduce room lighting** - Glare from even normal office light levels and windows can contribute to eye strain. Consider turning on only half the lights in an area to see what a difference this can make. Never turn on under-cabinet lighting behind your computer monitor. Reposition computer monitors at right angles to light sources to minimize glare.

**Use your copy holder** - Adjustable copy holders should ideally hold reference materials between the monitor and the keyboard, inline with both. Positions to the side can sometimes cause neck pain. Materials should be at the same distance from the eyes as the screen.

**Adjust your work area** - Maximize your comfort and productivity by ensuring the right adjustments of your chair, desk height, keyboard, mouse, telephone, and other frequently-used items. OHSU purchases adjustable office equipment to assure that your needs are met, so give yourself permission to adjust it! If you need help, talk with your supervisor or seek ergonomic advice that is available on the O-Zone (search: ergonomics).

**Clean your screen** - Computer screens can get smudged and dirty, and our eyes sometimes get distracted by this dirt. Wipe your screen clean by using window cleaner or special alcohol-based screen wipes to keep your view clear.

**Protection** - Wear eye protection when your job exposes you to things that might damage your eyes, either physically (flying particles) or chemically.

