

# STOP STARING AT THAT SCREEN!

TOO MUCH TIME IN FRONT OF YOUR COMPUTER OR MOBILE PHONE COULD LEAD TO EYE PROBLEMS. HERE'S HOW TO PREVENT THEM.

Your eyes are dry and red, your vision is blurry, and you're blinking more. Are your eyes tired or do you have computer vision syndrome (CVS)?

CVS is not permanent but it's caused by long periods of computer use; the more time in front of a screen, the worse it gets, says Dr Lee Sao Bing, medical director at Shinagawa Lasik & Eye Centre. Two eye doctors we spoke to say they have seen more patients complaining of this problem, which is also due to heavy smartphone and tablet use.

For a quick fix, take a long break or use eye drops, but if you still feel uncomfortable, see a doctor to get special eye gels or drops. Ignoring the problem may lead you to constantly rub your eyes, which could result in a bad eye infection. The best solution is to prevent it in the first place:



brightness settings are just right. When reading long documents, increase the font size to between 12 and 14, Dr Lee says.

## 2 TAKE A BREAK EVERY 30 MINUTES

Don't feel guilty; your eyes need rest from the screen glare. Closing them for a short while also prevents the office air-conditioning from making them drier, which worsens the problem, adds Dr Lee.

## 3 DON'T SLOUCH IN FRONT OF THE SCREEN

A too-high monitor makes you open your eyes wider, like sitting in the first row in a cinema. The natural moisture in your eyes then evaporates faster, leading to drier eyes, says Dr Louis Tong, senior consultant ophthalmologist, cornea service at Singapore National Eye Centre. The monitor's three-quarter mark should be at your eye level.

## WHEN USING EYE DROPS...

Go for preservative-free ones in disposable vials, advises Dr Tong. Sensitive eyes will turn red and itchy otherwise. Buy them at pharmacies, polyclinics or hospitals.

## 1 NO "TOO BRIGHT" SCREENS

Angle your screen away from light sources to avoid glaring reflections. Use websites, like [www.clickonf5.org/3846/adjust-brightness-contrast-monitor](http://www.clickonf5.org/3846/adjust-brightness-contrast-monitor), to make sure the screen's

## 4 DON'T BE VAIN

Leave your contact lenses at home and wear glasses when you're expecting a long day, says Dr Lee. Lenses tend to be more drying on eyes; wear them for a maximum of 10 hours a day.