



Your vision needs in the (home) office

With the COVID19 pandemic, we had to quickly adjust to a new way of working. IT equipment, networks and social applications now simply have to meet the demands of people who work remotely.



However, for a lot of people, a home office setup is still not ideal. Most of us work on laptops, tablets or even from smartphones at times. Small displays and keyboards certainly contribute to the symptoms of eye and vision fatigue, as more and more people experience and report these issues after moving to a home office environment.

For this reason, it's definitely a good time to address general vision health. Whether you work from home or at an office, it's hard for your eyes to constantly adjust to flickering, glowing screens. Staring at a display means that you automatically blink less, placing additional strain on the eyes. Some medical experts even warn that more time spent working at home can lead to eye damage. But is there any truth behind these warnings? We asked our expert, Dr. Christian Lappe, Head of Technical Communication at ZEISS Vision Care, for his opinion.

Is there a direct link between working from home and eye damage?

To speak of eye damage is probably a bit of an exaggeration. Nevertheless, it is evident that factors such as small screens and poor lighting can lead to eye fatigue and a loss of visual comfort. This typically manifests itself in the form of irritated and tired eyes or perceived impairment of the quality of vision.

Are there specific warning signals to look out for to make sure our eyes are not overworked?

Signs of eye strain vary from individual to individual. Symptoms can range from tired, dry, irritated, or watery eyes, and intermittent blurred vision to headaches.

What can I do about these symptoms?

As a rule, I recommend a good home office setup to counteract the symptoms. The eyes tire quickly if it has to constantly compensate for contrast, so make sure that there is enough light in your dedicated workspace and other areas where you spend a lot of time working. A classic desk



lamp with a small light bulb may look pretty, but it usually intensifies these contrasts. So, it is better to use light fixtures that distribute sufficiently bright light evenly. Ideally, your desk should be in front of a window so that your eyes can occasionally wander into the distance. Specifically, the so-called 20-20-20 rule is recommended: every 20 minutes, the eyes should look at a distance of at least 20 feet (or 6 meters) for 20 seconds in order to relax.

Conscious blinking is also important. We often blink too little when we look at a screen. Natural blinking is too infrequent, and this can potentially result in a torn tear film and temporary dry eyes. Getting up from time to time, walking around or taking a short walk outdoors is also useful and helps to relieve the eyes.



Regarding IT equipment: Are there any specific recommendations for the screen size I should use at home or in the office?

Larger screens have a higher resolution and display more information. If the screen is too small, the eye naturally has to focus more. In this respect, a large screen with a reasonable refresh rate and thus a larger display of information

is softer on the eye.

Another interesting question: What is the blue light emitted by computer displays all about?

In general, this high-energy visible light is said to influence our wake-sleep cycle, mood, and concentration. In other words, blue light is a positive and necessary factor – if present in the right dose and at the right time. But questions about the potential problems and health risks associated with blue light emitted by artificial light sources are increasing. However, there is no risk of acute eye damage – according to current scientific and medical knowledge, illumination intensities are far below known limits from photo-biological risk assessments. Nevertheless, other scientific studies show that blue light can have an impact on our visual comfort and wellbeing. This includes complaints about a perceived reduction in quality of vision, perception of glare or subjective visual stress.

Lenses with blue light filters can help. For example, the new [ZEISS BlueGuard Lenses](#) absorb a certain portion of blue light and provide greater visual comfort while ensuring high lens clarity.