

## VDU - Computer Screens Advice

Many people find that their eyes are strained when using a computer screen commonly termed a VDU. A large study in Australian Government Health workers identified common problems of sore or tired eyes, but VDUs were not shown to cause any eye problems such as cataracts or glaucoma. They are of course just a Television by another name, and televisions have not been shown to cause any eye problems.

### Advice

1. The closer the VDU is to you the harder the eyes have to work. This is because your eyes have to both focus (accommodate) and the eyes themselves rotate inwards towards your nose (otherwise you would have double vision). Therefore to relax the eyes have the VDU screen at an arms length or more away from you.
2. Every half hour relax your eyes focusing by looking at something in the distance.
3. If your eyes feel gritty, it may be due to the electrostatic charge emitted and/or the heat of the VDU.
  - a. Sit further away so your eyes are less effected.
  - b. Ensure that you are not sat in a draft or air conditioner.
  - c. Use an earthed anti-glare screen which attaches to the VDU
  - d. If all else fails use Viscotears eye drops which aid the lubrication of the eyes.
4. Blinking - There is a tendency for some people not to blink while using a VDU but simply stare. This can easily dry the eyes out and lead to tired eyes. Remember to blink!
4. Posture - Likewise there is also a tendency to sit absolutely motionless while using a VDU, this can cause acute inflammation of joints. Remember to periodically move your neck, shoulders, back and legs etc.. Ensure you have a good seat with lumbar support adjusted at the correct height for you.
6. Repetitive Strain Injuries The repetitive nature of using a keyboard can lead to this injury in a few peoples fingers and wrists. Ensure you have a wrist support and avoid long stretches of continuous fast typing. If any symptoms begin to occur seek advice from your GP.

### Glasses for Computers

The EEC directive on VDU regulations have require employers to provide an annual eye test for users who spend an extensive amount of time on the computer. However employers are only required to provide glasses if they are required solely for VDU work. The simple need for reading glasses, which happens to all of us from the age of 46 years is not a sufficient reason. In my experience the only situation where employers do pay for spectacles is the more elderly patient say 55+ who needs a specific intermediate reading glass. ie they find the reading glasses too strong and the distance glasses too weak.

Should you require any other advice please do not hesitate to ask your Optometrist or Doctor.

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