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news & notes

EYE-OPENING STATS

Computer eyestrain is not a minor issue experienced by only a few people. As more and more professions in the twenty-first century go online, more and more employees spend hours a day in front of a computer screen.

Take a look at these eye-popping statistics:

- Approximately 3 out of 4 people who use computers for extended periods of time complain of eyestrain problems.

- It's estimated that about 10 million people get eye exams for computer-related eye- strain problems every year.

- More people every year are using computers both at home and at work for several hours a day.

- Computer eyestrain can also be exacerbated by the normal aging process of the eyes.

Computer Eyestrain
Keep your eyes healthy in the digital age

August is **Eye Injury Prevention Month,** a good time to look at the growing problem of computer eyestrain. Between work and home, more people are spending more time peering at computer screens than watching TV.

Here's how to set up your computer to minimize eyestrain:

- **Position the monitor 25" to 30" from your eyes**, which is about the distance to your fingertip when your arm is stretched out in front of you.
- **Set monitor height so that the top edge is even with your sight line.** Tilt the screen upward so you are not looking at the image at an angle.
- **Set monitor screen resolution so that text is easy to read**—600 x 800 pixels is standard.
- **Set monitor's brightness to low** and contrast to high.
- **Set monitor refresh rate to 75 hz** or higher.
- **Minimize glare** by making sure background light level is about the same as the screen light level. Minimize direct sunlight or bright lights in front of or behind the monitor. Attach a glare shield, if necessary.
- **Place a document holder at the same level as the monitor** to prevent repetitive eye movement from paper to screen.
- **Keep the screen clean.**

Follow these tips to keep your eyes healthy at the computer:

- **Give your eyes a 20/20/20 break**. Every 20 minutes focus on something at least 20 feet away and hold that focus for at least 20 seconds.

- **Blink often.** The average blink rate is 22 times per minute, but it goes down to 7 per minute when looking at a monitor, which causes the eye lens to dry out. Use eye drops, if necessary.

- **Place your palms over your eyes for 60 seconds** every 30 minutes. This warms the muscles around your eyes and relaxes them.

How the pirate got his eye patch.

First Aid for Eye Injuries

Do you know the right steps to take?

If you get an eye injury on the job, *always* get medical attention. But while you're waiting for professional help, applying proper first aid could help prevent permanent damage.

Take this quiz to see if you know the proper first-aid measures for different eye injuries.

1. What should you do if you get a particle in your eye?
   a. Flush the eye with water.   b. Rub the eye.   c. Apply a cold compress.

2. What should you do if chemicals splash in your eye?
   a. Flush with water.   b. Do nothing and let tears wash chemical out.
   c. Apply a cold compress.

3. What should you do if you get a blow to an eye?
   a. Flush with water.   b. Rub the eye.   c. Apply a cold compress.

4. What should you do if you get a cut near an eye?
   a. Flush with water.   b. Bandage loosely.   c. Apply a cold compress.

5. What should you do if an object penetrates an eyeball?
   a. Flush with water.   b. Immobilize the object.   c. Pull it out right away.

Answers:
(1) a (2) a (3) c (4) b (5) b

Don't Be the Next One Hurt
Do your part to stop workplace accidents

None of us wants workplace accidents. Nobody comes to work and says, "Gee, I think I'll have an accident today." But how can we prevent accidents on the job? Is there anything we can do?

Yes, a lot! Here are eight simple steps to prevent workplace accidents:

1. **Get involved in safety meetings** and safety training sessions to improve your safety skills and your knowledge about how to prevent accident.
2. **Be a hazard detective** and be on the alert for hazards all day while you work.
3. **Learn from your mistakes** and the mistakes of co-workers so that those same mistakes don't lead to repeat accidents.
4. **Use good judgment and common sense.** Never take risks with your safety.
5. **Use safe work practices,** follow safety rules, and wear required PPE.
6. **Inspect PPE, instruments, equipment, and materials before you use them** to make sure they are in good condition and safe to use.
7. **Never guess about hazards or procedures.** If you're not sure, ask your supervisor before you begin the job.
8. **Cooperate in accident investigations** so that we can find out what happened and take corrective action to prevent future accidents.

Remember, if we don't stop accidents, you could be the next one injured.