

Benefits Spotlight

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Digital Fatigue and Eyestrain: What You Can Do

For many of us, spending 8+ hours staring at a computer screen, tablet or smartphone is a part of daily living. But this digital fatigue wears on your eyes, causing a condition called eyestrain.

Eyestrain occurs when your eyes feel tired, sore, watery (or sometimes dry) and itchy when they've been overused—such as while staring at a computer screen at work all day. Some people also get headaches from too much screen stare.

The good news? Eyestrain is rarely serious and easily managed. Here are some simple ways to give your eyes a breather.

- ***Blink once, blink twice...***: Interestingly, people often forget to blink when plugging away on the computer. The simple act of blinking can give your eyes a quick hit of refreshment.
- ***Think 20***: Taking breaks is probably the most well-known way to ward off eyestrain. A easy-to-remember way to make digital breaks a part of your routine is to think 20: Every 20 minutes, take 20 seconds to look at something 20 feet away from your screen.
- ***Wear glasses, when appropriate***: Today, there is eyewear specially made for specific situations (when you're working on a computer, for example). If you spend a lot of time in front of a screen, talk to your eye doctor about whether you should wear glasses or contacts that are designed for computer use.
- ***Let's talk lighting***: Bright lights above and behind you create glare that leads to eyestrain. If you can, turn off bright overhead lights, close nearby blinds and use a desk lamp for light. If you're unable to control the lighting in your work setting, an anti-glare monitor covering can help.
- ***Customize your space***: Place your monitor about one foot in front of you, with the screen just below eye level. Another tip is to boost the font size settings, so the words on the screen are easier to read without squinting your eyes.

Your eye doctor can share other ways to protect your eyes from today's digital demands. It's also important to see your eye doctor if your eyes remain sore, watery, blurred or itchy despite these tips, as that could mean something more serious is going on. Contact DeltaVision to find an in-network provider to ensure your vision receives the best possible care.

Sources

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/eyestrain/symptoms-causes/syc-20372397>

Do Cough Drops Cause Cavities?

As temperatures drop and sneezing soars, cough drops find their way back into purses, desk drawers and even school lunch boxes. But while cough drops can quell your cold symptoms, they can pose problems for your teeth.

The Connection Between Cough Drops and Cavities

Cough drops are a popular option to soothe cold symptoms because they provide fast-acting relief without a strong medicinal taste. How do they taste so good? The answer, oftentimes, is because they contain sugar, high fructose corn syrup or glucose syrup—all sweeteners that can cause problems for your teeth.

The bacteria that causes cavities—or tooth decay—feeds on sugar. So, the more sugar you consume, the higher likelihood you'll develop cavities. The content varies by brand, but some cough drops contain 4 grams of sugar and 15 calories per one drop. That can add up quickly.

Cough drops that contain these sugary sweeteners toe a fine line between medicine and candy, and many people mindlessly eat them without considering the effects on their dental health.



4 Tips to Choosing a Better Cough Drop

You don't have to cut cough drops from your cold-easing arsenal. The four tips below will help you use cough drops the right way:

1. **Choose a sugar-free drop:** Fortunately, most brands of cough drops offer sugar-free varieties. Choose a sugar-free option to eliminate the bacteria-loving sugar that contributes to tooth decay.
2. **Avoid gummy versions:** Gummies are fun and particularly kid friendly, but you should avoid gummies for oral health because they stick to your teeth more than a sucker-style drop. The longer food and other debris stay on your teeth, the more likely decay can develop.
3. **Limit how often you pop a drop:** Cough drops are designed to taste good—and you may think you're keeping your cough symptoms at bay the more you consume. But take a close look at the labels for the recommended amount to use. If the label recommends eating one every 2 hours, make sure to stay within those limits.
4. **Brush and rinse after each drop:** Brushing your teeth—or simply rinsing with water—after you finish each cough drop will go a long way toward keeping your mouth healthy and clean.

Cough drop-popping season is here, but you can keep it from harming your teeth with these simple strategies. Here's to a new year of good oral and overall health!