

Women Spending More Time on Gizmos and Gadgets – but at What Price? What Women Need to Know about High Screen Time

The evolution of modern technologies has changed the landscape in which people communicate, do their jobs and function in daily life. However, this technology evolution has led to a significant increase in the amount of time Canadians spend in front of digital screens over the past five years. What's more, the average users of these technological conveniences are not just children or young adults. In fact, the Canadian baby boomer population is spending at least 7 ½ hours a day in front of potentially eye-straining devices.

New Leger Marketing data indicates that compared to five years ago, women baby-boomers, aged 45-54 are reporting higher usage of eye-straining devices versus male boomers and as a result are reporting more eye and vision ailments than other age groups. These eye problems are often described as CVS, computer vision syndrome, and if left untreated can lead to increased discomfort and eye and vision strain.

While technologies create the opportunity to simplify the chaos of everyday life, more and more women are depending on their computers and Blackberries to keep track of their family's appointments and whereabouts. In the evening, sitting down at the computer or in front of the television provides an escape from a long day, but adds to the strain on their eyes.

Try these helpful tips to minimize eye strain:

- Follow the "20-20-20 RULE". Every 20 minutes of screen time, take a 20 second break to blink and focus your eyes on something 20 feet away.
- Be kind to your eyes and schedule routine eye exams to maintain eye and vision health. If you wear glasses, ensure they are up to date and suit your screen-time habits.

Eye and vision health conditions do not always come with recognizable symptoms and may go undetected. Comprehensive eye exams help detect, minimize and treat symptoms associated with computer vision syndrome. To find an optometrist in your area, visit www.opto.ca.