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Is Too Much Screen Time Harming Children's Vision?

As children spend more time tethered to screens, there is increasing concern about potential harm to their visual development. Ophthalmologists are seeing a marked increase in children with dry eye and eye strain from too much screen time. But does digital eyestrain cause lasting damage? Should your child use reading glasses or computer glasses?

While scientists look for a definitive answer, there is no doubt that most computer users experience digital eyestrain. Just like adults, kids can experience dry eye, eye strain, headaches, and blurry vision. While symptoms are typically temporary, they may be frequent and persistent.

Here are 10 tips to help protect your child's eyes from computer eyestrain:

1. Set a kitchen timer or a smart device timer to remind them to look away from the screen.
2. Alternate reading an e-book with a real book and encourage kids to look up and out the window every two chapters.
3. After completing a level in a video game, look out the window for 20 seconds.
4. Pre-mark books with a paperclip every few chapters to remind your child to look up. On an e-book, use the "bookmark" function for the same effect.
5. Avoid using a computer outside or in brightly lit areas, as the glare on the screen can create strain.
6. Adjust the brightness and contrast of your computer screen so that it feels comfortable to you.

American Academy of Ophthalmology. "Is too much screen time harming children's vision? The American Academy of Ophthalmology helps parents separate the facts from fiction." ScienceDaily. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/08/180806162718.htm (accessed July 18, 2019).

7. Use good posture when using a computer and when reading.
8. Encourage your child to hold digital media 18 to 24 inches away.
9. Create a distraction that causes your child to look up every now and then.
10. Remind them to blink when watching a screen.

"I prefer to teach kids better habits, instead of supplying them a crutch like reading glasses to enable them to consume even more media," said K. David Epley, M.D., clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology. "If you run too far and your legs start hurting, you stop. Likewise, if you've been reading too long or watching videos too long, and your eyes start hurting, you should stop."

Find more information on how to protect your children's eyes on the Academy's EyeSmart website (<https://www.aao.org/eye-health>).

1 in 5 Deaths Worldwide Associated With Poor Diets

According to a recently published study, 11 million deaths in 2017 were attributable to dietary risk factors. That total number translates to one-fifth of the world's total deaths. The study defines dietary risk factors and poor diets as ones that are heavy in sugar, salt, and trans fats.

While this study reveals startling numbers, it's a well-known fact that eating healthy can help reduce your risk of developing chronic conditions like heart disease or Type 2 diabetes. By keeping such conditions at bay, you can maintain your overall health and be well on your way to living a long, healthy life.

Here are some tips to help you start eating healthier:

- Balance your plate with a variety of foods. Your plate should be 50% fruits and vegetables, 25% lean meat, poultry, or fish, and 25% grains.

- Get a personalized eating plan. Speak with your doctor to develop a plan that will give you the amounts of each food group you need daily. Your doctor may recommend you seek out a registered dietician or nutritionist to create the best plan for you.
- Beware of sweetened drinks. Sodas and sports drinks are high in calories and sugars or sugar substitutes. Whenever possible, choose water over these drinks.
- Read food labels carefully. Make sure to always read nutrition labels to find out how healthy a particular food may be. It's also important to check the ingredient list, which is different from the nutritional label.

For more information on how you can improve or maintain a healthy diet, contact your doctor.

Breastfeeding May Help Protect Mothers Against Stroke

Breastfeeding is not only good for babies. There is growing evidence it may also reduce the risk for stroke in post-menopausal women who reported breastfeeding at least one child, according to new research in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*.

Researchers analyzed data on 80,191 participants in the Women's Health Initiative observational study, a large ongoing national study that has tracked the medical events and health habits of postmenopausal women who were recruited between 1993 and 1998. All women in this analysis had delivered one or more children and 58% reported ever having breastfed. Among these women, 51% breastfed for one to six months, 22% for seven to 12 months, and 27% for 13 or more months. At the time of recruitment, the average age was 63.7 years and the follow-up period was 12.6 years.

After adjusting for non-modifiable stroke risk factors, such as age and family history, researchers found that the stroke risk among women who breastfed their babies was on average:

- 23% lower in all women
- 32% lower in Hispanic women
- 48% lower in black women
- 21% lower in white women
- 19% lower in women who had breastfed for up to six months; a longer reported length of breastfeeding was associated with a greater reduction in risk

Currently, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for six months, with continuation of breast feeding for one year or longer.

American Heart Association. "Breastfeeding may help protect mothers against stroke." ScienceDaily. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/08/180822082625.htm (accessed July 18, 2019).



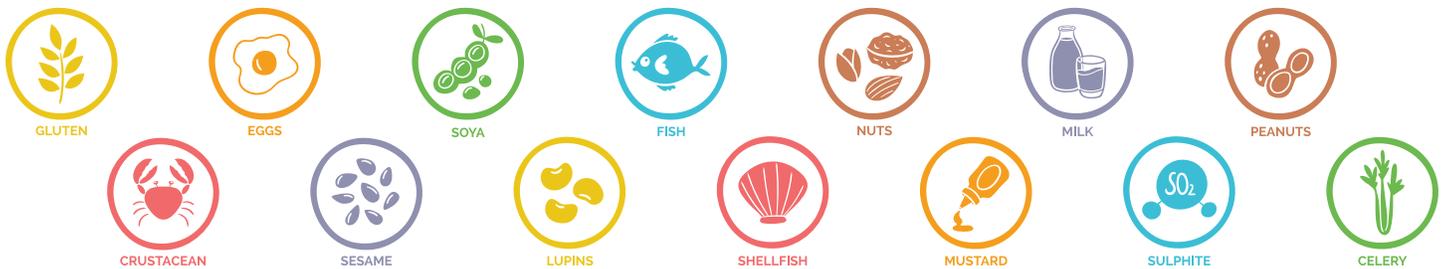
Introducing Foods Early May Help Prevent Allergies

According to a new report from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), introducing allergenic foods like peanut products, fish, or eggs may help prevent food allergies in infants who are at a high risk of developing one. The report explains that when allergenic foods are given to infants as early as the age of 4 months, the immune system's cells can take up the allergenic proteins and develop a tolerance to them.

While most infants aren't considered to be at a high risk for developing food allergies, the report states that infants with a low or standard risk of food allergies can benefit from early introduction, too.

It's important to remember, though, that every infant is different. For more information, consult your pediatrician.

Top 14 Food Allergens



August Recipe Crockpot Barbecue Chicken

- 4-6 pieces boneless skinless chicken breasts (frozen or thawed)
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 bottle BBQ sauce
- ¼ c brown sugar
- ¼ c vinegar
- ½ - 1 tsp. garlic powder



Mix BBQ sauce with all ingredients except chicken. Place chicken in crockpot and pour sauce over it. Cook on low for 4-6 hours. The chicken breasts can be served whole or shredded, over rice, in a salad, or in a sandwich.

Hansen, Jared. "Crockpot BBQ Chicken." Healthy Recipes. January 01, 1970. Accessed July 25, 2019. <http://staylean.blogspot.com/2014/07/crockpot-bbq-chicken.html>.

This is for informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical professional.

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