September 2014 Newsletter



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## Can your eyes see the distance?

Nearsightedness or Myopia in children is on the rise as technology use increases. Being "myopic" means that items up close appear clearly but items at a distance are harder to focus on creating blurred vision. Children frequently use electronics that require them to focus up close such as iPods, iPads, cell phones and video games. The long spans of time spent performing these actions can be harmful to their sight. Studies have shown that children ages 8 to 18 spend about 7.38 hours watching television, using the computer and playing video games; about 29% of those children actually own their laptop computer. With myopia a decrease in your child's school performance, learning & athletics could arise. But the increased incidence of myopia doesn't only affect children. For people with 12 or more years of formal education, the prevalence of myopia is now as high as **59.8%**. There are steps you can take to reduce digital eye strain and the affect it has on your vision and your child's vision. A common sign of nearsightedness is difficulty with the clarity of distant objects like a movie or TV screen or the chalkboard in school. A comprehensive optometric examination will include testing for nearsightedness. An optometrist can prescribe eyealasses or contact lenses that correct nearsightedness by bending the visual images that enter the eyes, focusing the images correctly at the back of the eye. Depending on the amount of nearsightedness, you may only need to wear glasses or contact lenses for certain activities, like watching a movie or driving a car. Or, if you are very nearsighted, they may need to be worn at all times.

Another option for treating nearsightedness is orthokeratology (ortho-k), also known as corneal refractive therapy. Would you like to be able to see without wearing contact lenses or glasses? Be sure to read October's newsletter for more information about this revolutionary breakthrough in eye care.



The easiest way to help yourself reduce risk of digital eye strain when working at a computer or using a portable electronic device is to follow what many eye care providers call the "20-20-20" rule:

Every 20 minutes, look away from your screen and view an object that's at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Other things you can do to reduce your risk of eye discomfort include:

- Blink your eyes fully after each page view.
- Get up from your desk at least every 20 minutes to stretch your body and relax your eyes.
- Increase the size of the font on your screen.
- Adjust your device's brightness and/or contrast settings.
- Purchase a device with a higher resolution screen.
- Make sure you are holding your device a minimum of 14 to 16 inches away or at least the length of your forearm.

