



JULY 2017 HEALTHY TIP MORE SUNSHINE – LESS SCREEN TIME

It's one part of work that few can avoid – staring at a screen for hours each day. While technology has simplified our lives, we must ask at what cost to our health? Researchers have found that the longer we stare at computer, phone, and TV screens, the more strain we place on our eyes and neck. Here are some ways to reduce the harmful effects of too much screen time.



Ways to reduce screen time today:

- **Establish Limits:** Tell yourself that you are only using your computer or phone for a particular purpose. If you are using those devices for fun, set a time limit, perhaps an hour, and turn off the device when you reach the limit. If you are watching TV, tell yourself that you will not watch it for more than two hours.
- **Fewer TV Screens:** The trend is growing. A 2009 study from Nielsen showed that nearly 54% of homes in the United States had more than two television screens, while only 18% had one screen. It would be best to limit of how many screens are in your home.
- **Get Active:** For every hour that you do not have a screen pressed to your face, take a few minutes to walk around and stretch. Not doing so can increase your chances of developing a cardiovascular disease later in your life.
- **20-20-20 Rule:** To reduce eye strain, set a timer to remind yourself to look up and away from your computer, cell phone, and other screens every 20 minutes, for at least 20 seconds, and focus on a spot 20 feet away.

Consequences of too much screen time:

- **Eye Strain:** Prolonged screen exposure has caused blurred vision, double vision, redness, ocular sprains.
- **Neck Pain:** Being in front of a device for too long affects your posture which can cause you to sit improperly and add unnecessary pressure to your spine and nerves.
- **Increased risk of diabetes in children.** Research showed that spending an excessive amount of time in front of a TV or computer screen increases the risk for Type 2 Diabetes and weight gain.

*Year-round education and diligence is critical, especially when it comes to relieving neck and eye strain.
Arm yourself with as much knowledge as you can!*

Sources:

- <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/reduce-screen-time/tips-to-reduce-screen-time.htm>
- <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/news/2009/more-than-half-the-homes-in-us-have-three-or-more-tvs.html>
- https://medlineplus.gov/news/fullstory_164085.html

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