

# BLUE-LIGHT BLOCKING GLASSES, HELP OR HYPE?



Many jobs, schools, and tasks such as shopping, are currently done remotely, in front of a computer screen, for multiple hours a day. With such additional screen time, since the beginning of COVID19, one must wonder how it's affecting our eyes and how we can protect our vision from prolonged exposure to our digital technology and its blue-light display.

Having recently been to the ophthalmologist for my son's vision check-up, our doctor mentioned there had been a large influx of decreased vision recently, which she believed was due to our increased need to stare at a computer screen for hours on end. Many children, having perfect vision last year, were now needing corrective eyewear not long after the beginning of remote learning. She believed there was a direct correlation.

Since my son, a young teenager, now remote learning full-time, was one of those people whose vision had worsened over the past year, I asked her if I should consider blue-light blocking lenses for his new pair of glasses. The following is what I was told, which I subsequently confirmed with the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

## Negative Aspects of Blue-Light Blocking Glasses



- **False Advertisement:** Ads promote these lenses as a way to save your vision, reduce eyestrain, and protect your eyes from disease, however, it is mostly how we use our devices and the overuse of such digital equipment, not necessarily the blue-light, that is primarily the cause.

- **Research:** Since these are relatively new, there is not much proof either way.

## Benefits of Blue-Light Blocking Glasses



- **Sleep:** Our computer screen's display emits a high energy, brighter, shorter-wavelength, bluish light, which affects our production of melatonin. By blocking this blue light, many have remarked an increased quality of sleep and ease of falling asleep at night.

- **Headaches & Fatigue:** A few studies have shown that computer users with blue-light blocking glasses mentioned they suffered from noticeably fewer headaches and felt they could work longer without feeling eye strain.

## Best Advice for Eye Health



The American Academy of Ophthalmology has the following additional suggestions to relieve digital eye strain, which you and your family might want to incorporate for your eyes' health. They are as follows:

- **Adopt the 20-20-20 rule:** Every 20 minutes, look at something about 20 feet away, for 20 seconds
- **Reduce use:** Reduce your time in front of the screen as much as possible
- **Screen position:** Position your screen slightly downward
- **Seat position:** Be at least 25 inches away from your screen
- **Filter:** Use a matte filter to reduce glare
- **Lighting:** Do not use your computer in the dark
- **Take a break:** Step away every hour or so, stretch, close your eyes, and relax for a minute. Find things to do that are not tied to technology – maybe play outside.

Blue light has always been around us. Our sun radiates it. The difference is that now, most of our lives are consumed by some form of technology with a backlight, which our eyes are directly exposed to more often.

Due to a lack of long-term research, the verdict is currently inconclusive in regards to the glasses' full benefits toward eye health and vision, however, since there are no adverse effects and the majority of those wearing blue-light blocking glasses mention they notice a positive difference in their sleep quality, focus, headache frequency and eyestrain, then what is there to lose?

As for my son, I did add the blue-light blocking feature to his new glasses. He has had them for a week now and he seems to like them. He has never suffered from headaches before, but did mention his eyes don't feel as tired, and that, possibly, he does feel a little less over-stimulated when he's working on the computer late at night.

As a mom, even without conclusive proof, I am happy with the decision to add this feature to his lenses. I do feel he is slightly calmer at night, and I rest comfortably in the knowledge that even though these lenses "might" not yet have enough research results, the currently proven benefits outweigh what has yet to be confirmed.

Whatever you choose,

**PROTECT YOUR EYE HEALTH – MINIMIZE SCREEN TIME – ENJOY OUTSIDE!**