



# Blue Light and Screen Time Guide for Vision Care Providers

Strategies to Help Patients Maintain or Improve Their Eye Health



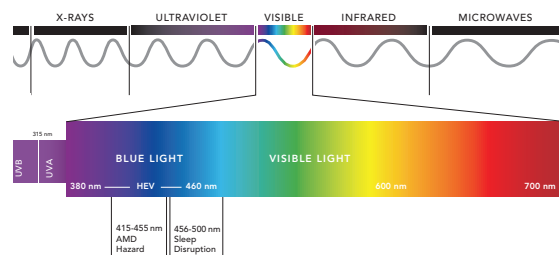
**As many Americans work and learn from home, they may be spending an increasing amount of time in front of digital displays that emit potentially harmful levels of blue light.**

Based on a recent analysis, the average person spends up to 13 hours per day in front of digital devices, up from between 7 to 10 hours a day in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

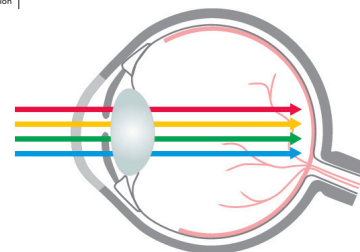
Excessive use of digital devices may cause symptoms of digital eye strain and contribute to short- and long-term eye health issues.<sup>2</sup>

## What is blue light?

All digital devices, such as smartphones and computers, emit “blue light,” which is a low wavelength, high-energy light that has the potential to damage the eyes over the long term.<sup>2</sup>



Visible light is transmitted to the retina from natural and artificial light sources, between the range of 400-700 nm.



<sup>1</sup> <https://eyesafe.com/covid-19-screen-time-spike-to-over-13-hours-per-day/>

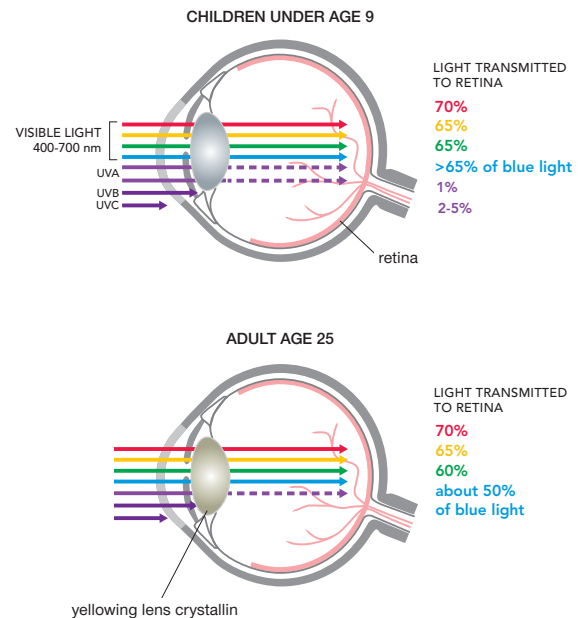
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6288536/>

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## Eye care providers can raise patient awareness of blue light exposure:

- Long-term exposure to digital devices emitting blue light from a short distance may cause potential eye health issues, especially in high-risk populations such as people with dry eye, contact lens users and the elderly.<sup>1</sup>
- In young children, more than 65% of blue light is transmitted to the retina.<sup>2</sup>
- Blue light's impact on circadian rhythm and sleep may have serious health consequences.<sup>3</sup>



## Helping keep patients healthier and productive

In general, healthy vision may be supported by a holistic approach, including awareness, education and eye protection solutions together with comprehensive eye exams to help detect and enable for clinical care interventions to help address vision problems.

## Practical approaches to help encourage good eye health for patients<sup>5</sup>

- 1 Encourage patients to schedule regular eye exams, including for family members.
- 2 Look for symptoms of eye health issues and digital eye strain due to excessive screen time, such as dry eyes, headaches while looking at screens, and changes to vergence and accommodation.
- 3 Suggest that patients be cautious of excessive screen time, and they keep computer screens at least 30 inches away from their eyes.<sup>1</sup>
- 4 Suggest the use of digital devices with built-in eye protection, blue light limiting screen filters for existing devices, or protective eyewear, in accordance with each patient's screen time habits.<sup>1</sup>

Children are particularly at risk because their eyes don't have the same blue light-filtering ability that adult eyes have. Children also tend to hold devices closer to their eyes, increasing the intensity of high-energy visible blue light reaching and entering their eyes.<sup>2</sup>

**Nearly 80% of eye care professionals** estimate that blue light is impacting not only patients' eyes but their overall physical and mental health.<sup>4</sup>

Providers cited these expected benefits from blue light protective solutions:

- 1) Sleep improvement (71%)
- 2) Improved eye and vision care (69%)
- 3) Greater satisfaction with their overall care (56%)
- 4) Morale and mood increase (45%)<sup>4</sup>

**83% of respondents** estimate that up to 75% of patients are impacted by blue light-related symptoms.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aoa.org/healthy-eyes/eye-and-vision-conditions/computer-vision-syndrome>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/21600300/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://keio.pure.elsevier.com/en/publications/global-rise-of-potential-health-hazards-caused-by-blue-light-indu>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eyesafe.com/uhc>

<sup>5</sup> The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

# Product solutions that may help maintain eye health

Some new vision benefit programs<sup>1</sup> may offer a variety of options for supporting a healthier work environment, including discounts for:



## Laptop, Notebook and Computer Displays

Low blue light displays may help to reduce eye health hazards at the source.



## Screen Protection

Screen protection overlays a filter that may help limit potentially harmful blue light from mobile devices without changing color integrity.



## Eyewear

Eyewear with anti-reflective coating may help prevent potentially harmful reflective glare and reduce the risk of digital eye strain.<sup>2</sup>



## Eye care providers can recommend products that meet industry standards for low blue light

UnitedHealthcare Vision offers guidance on display types from leading brands that meet maximum permissible energy and color performance requirements – all guided by the latest health research and input from leaders in health care.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Coverage may be available to eligible beneficiaries with qualified vision plans underwritten or administered by UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Administrative services provided by MARCH® Vision Care Group, Inc. or their affiliates.

<sup>2</sup> Pending availability

<sup>3</sup> <https://eyesafe.com/standards>

## Find out what UnitedHealthcare Vision can do for your patients' eye health in connection to screen time

[eyesafe.com/uhc](https://eyesafe.com/uhc)

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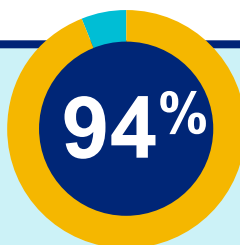
# Screen Time 2020 Report Overview

As people may be spending more time on digital devices due to COVID-19, some eye care professionals and employers are becoming increasingly concerned about the potential health impacts of increased exposure to blue light. Highlights of the report are shown below. A complete copy of the report is available on <https://eyesafe.com/uhc>

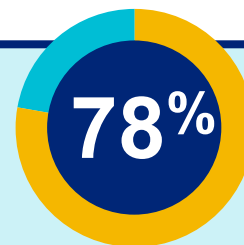


## 13+ hours

are spent on screens per day since COVID-19 emerged.<sup>1</sup>



of eye doctors are concerned.<sup>2</sup>



of employers are concerned.<sup>2</sup>

By offering blue light protective solutions, eye care providers believe the expected benefits most often cited include:



Sleep improvement (71%)<sup>2</sup>



Improve eye and vision care (69%)<sup>2</sup>



Greater satisfaction with their overall care (56%)<sup>2</sup>

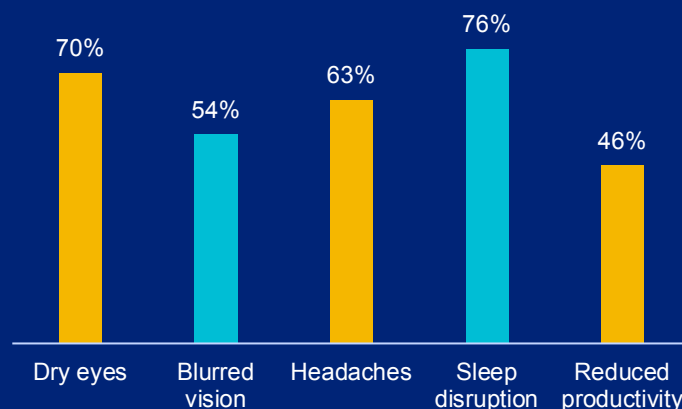


Morale and mood increase (45%)<sup>2</sup>

**Over 77%** of employers want a specific insurance or benefit plan covering impacts of screen time.<sup>2</sup>

**Nearly 8 in 10** eye care professionals estimate that blue light is impacting not only patients' eyes but their overall physical and mental health.<sup>2</sup>

Symptoms most cited by eye care professionals as a result of excessive blue light exposure from digital devices include:<sup>2</sup>



Employers and eye care professionals both identified the light sources presenting the most potential health issues for employees and patients:<sup>2</sup>

- Phones
- Notebook/desktop computers

<sup>1</sup> <https://eyesafe.com/covid-19-screen-time-spike-to-over-13-hours-per-day/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://eyesafe.com/uhc>

