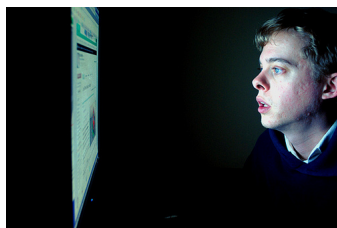# Tips for Preventing "Square Eyes"

Written by Ryan Donada

In today's technologically advanced world, it has become increasingly common to spend hours staring at computer screens, tablets and smart phones. According to local experts, staying glued to technology for long periods of time may ruin a person's eyesight. Dr. Tyson Tanner, optometrist for Southwestern Eye Center in Phoenix and Sun City, calls this condition "square eyes," a non-literal term used to describe strained or tired eyes, which result from constantly using electronic devices. "The more time we spend staring at our screen the more fatigued our eyes focusing system becomes and the more uncomfortable our vision becomes," Dr. Tyson Tanner says. Headaches, eyestrain and eye fatigue are common symptoms of experiencing square eyes. Although the condition is not permanent, Dr. Tanner offers great tips for proper visual hygiene that would prevent someone from having square eyes:

1. Rest the eye's focusing system by looking at a distant object (at least 20 feet away.) This should be done for one to two minutes for every of screen looking.
2. Holding smartphones too close to the face causes eyes to work harder than normal. Try holding the phone a little farther away (at about 16 inches).
3. We often blink less while staring at a screen, which can cause burning or eye irritation. Blink more!
4. Lubricating eyes with eye drops can help moisturize and comfort the eyes. Use a drop for every couple of hours of near work.
5. Eating a balanced diet that is rich in green leafy vegetables is important to maintain eye health.
6. There are vitamins and supplements, which contain certain antioxidants, leutine and xeoxanthine which help promote retinal health.
7. Proper hydration and Omega 3 fatty acids like fish oil can help with dryness and the eyes stay better lubricated.

 Overall, Dr. Tanner says the most important tip is to rest the eyes periodically from electronic devices—and to remember to blink!

Photo of Dr. Tanner Tyson