

Help for headache

Recurring headaches can be a symptom of an underlying problem. Vision problems that cause eyestrain and associated headache include astigmatism, longsightedness (hyperopia) and poor binocular vision. Eye-related headaches can also occur after extended periods of close work that require intense concentration. Presbyopia, which affects most people from the age of 40 years, can make you more prone to near-work induced headaches.

In cases of uncorrected hyperopia and astigmatism, the eyes' muscles have to work harder to keep the image in focus. With presbyopia the lens becomes harder and inflexible with age, causing blurriness at near, sore eyes and difficulty changing focus from near to distance. Poor binocular co-ordination means people's eyes may not work well together, causing strain on the external muscles of the eye and resulting in tired or aching eyes, poor concentration, headaches and blurring of vision, particularly with close work.

Most conditions can be corrected with prescription spectacles or contact lenses and sometimes advice about lighting, glare



reduction, eye exercises and computer ergonomics can help.

Sometimes a headache can be preceded by visual disturbances. This is known as a visual migraine. You may see a small spot in the centre of your vision with bright, flashing, zig-zag lines surrounding the

central spot. Visual migraines are not caused by your eyes but your optometrist can examine you to reassure you.

If you experience headaches after reading or using the computer, or after work every day, or feel pain around your eyes, seek an eye examination by an optometrist.

YOUR OPTOMETRIST