

Seeing 20-20-20



Humans normally blink an average of 15 times per minute, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. However, when staring at a computer or anything that requires intensive, close work, we blink about half that much. This strains our eyes, which can lead to fatigue, blurry vision and sometimes headaches.

To prevent eyestrain, experts recommend the **20-20-20 rule** — every 20 minutes, shift your eyes to look at an object 20 feet away and allow your eyes 20 seconds to readjust. You can also get up and walk around, which pulls double duty as it relieves your body from sitting in a stagnant position. Other guidelines to remember during **Workplace Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month**:

- ✓ Place your computer screen about 25 inches (or arm's length) away from you. Position it so your gaze is slightly downward.
- ✓ Reduce screen glare with a screen filter.
- ✓ Adjust the room lighting so the computer screen isn't the brightest thing you see.

20
MINUTES
20
FEET
20
SECONDS

Lifting DOs and DON'Ts

Unfortunately, injury from lifting is something that happens frequently. Here are some dos and don'ts when it comes to safe lifting:

DOs:

DO size up the load before attempting to lift and get help if something seems too heavy or bulky to lift. If no one is around, use a handcart or dolly.

DO inspect your path ahead of time. Remove any obstacles or tripping hazards.

DO squat close to the load, keep your back straight and get a firm grip on the object. Lift with your legs and not your back.

DO use ramps and liftgates to load items onto trucks rather than lifting them.



DON'Ts:

DON'T carry a load that blocks your view.

DON'T be in a hurry. Most accidents happen when we are in a hurry and get distracted.

DON'T lift with your back or twist your body when lifting an object.

DON'T put uneven pressure on the spine by carrying an item on 1 shoulder, with 1 hand or with 1 arm.

Supplement Safety

Used properly, some supplements can help your health. However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warns consumers to be careful. Here are some safety tips when it comes to purchasing and taking supplements:

Be careful when purchasing supplements from international stores, online, at flea markets or swap meets. Purchasing supplements at these places could be risky.

Be careful with anything labeled natural. Natural is a buzzword that doesn't mean the product is safe or, in fact, has natural ingredients, says the FDA. Some may even contain drugs or toxins.



Beware of false claims. The FDA warns to be suspicious of any product claiming to treat a wide range of ailments, miracle cures and personal testimonials that seem too good to be true. **Caution:** *FDA-approved* is a false statement; the FDA doesn't approve or regulate dietary supplements.

Be alert for FDA warnings. Search www.fda.gov for safety advisories or sanctions against certain supplements before you purchase or take them.

Look for products certified by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) or NSF International. These independent labs have tested and approved these supplements.

Talk with your health care provider before taking supplements. Don't take supplements while taking prescription drugs before checking with your provider. There could be serious reactions, and supplements could reduce your medication's effectiveness.

5 STREET SMARTS for Kids

Most of us do the best we can to keep our children safe, but once they get a little older, it often means they are on their own when heading out to the bus stop or school. Here are 5 street smarts to teach your child, so they can get an A in safety:

1 Always walk children age 10 and younger to the bus stop or school. If they are older and walk to the bus without you, remind them to stay with a group if possible or to stay in areas with people around, and not take shortcuts through alleys, deserted parking lots or vacant lots.

2 Teach your children not to help strangers and review possible scenarios with them (e.g., someone asks for directions, etc.). **A good rule:** If the child doesn't know the person, that person should be considered a stranger even if this person says that he or she knows the parent. Follow the advice of the National Crime Prevention Council, which is "No, Go, Yell, Tell."

If in a dangerous situation, kids should say **no**, run away, yell as loudly as they can and tell a trusted adult what happened.

3 Tell your children to be alert to their surroundings. Texting and looking at their phone should be off-limits.

4 Teach them to listen to their instincts. If something feels wrong, tell them to leave the area quickly and get to a safe area.

5 Know how long it takes for your children to get to and from the bus stop or school. Check immediately if there is any delay.



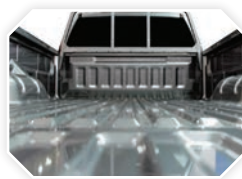
WATCH Out

We've all been there — you're driving and suddenly an object is flying toward your vehicle. Should you swerve to miss it? Do you close your eyes and hope for the best? We all know that closing your eyes would lead to disaster, but according to a study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, swerving to miss falling debris isn't much safer.

Nearly 37% of all deaths in road debris-related crashes occurred when a driver swerved to avoid hitting an object — an action that heightens the risk of losing control of a vehicle. The study also revealed another startling statistic: Road debris caused more than 200,000 crashes on U.S. roads between 2011 and 2014, resulting in about 39,000 injuries and more than 500 deaths.

What should you do as a driver?

- ➔ Search the road continually at least 15 seconds ahead so you will be prepared.
- ➔ Try to maintain 1 open space on 1 side of your vehicle in case you need to steer around an object.
- ➔ Don't tailgate. Always keep the proper car length behind the vehicle in front of you.
- ➔ If you can't avoid the object, then safely slow down before making contact with it.



Ensure that you don't cause an accident by securing all loads and loose items before traveling.

SAFETY CORNER

Keep Out of Reach

Sixty thousand U.S. children are treated for accidental medicine poisoning every year, with 7 out of 10 being toddlers, according to Safe Kids Worldwide.

If you have children or if children frequently visit your home (up to 20% of poisonings involve a grandparent's medication), make sure that all medications, supplements and vitamins are stored out of reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.

ALSO:

- ✓ Put away medicines, supplements and vitamins after every use.
- ✓ Don't keep medicines in a purse, backpack or briefcase that will be near a child.
- ✓ Read and follow label instructions when giving medicines to children — only use the dosing device that comes with the medication. Never use your household utensils.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers poison prevention tips at www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Poisoning/preventiontips.htm.



National Poison Prevention Week is March 19-25.



Reach your personal best with www.personalbest.com/extras/17V3tools.

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