About 60 million people around the world have Computer Vision Syndrome

Increasing amount of screen time has led to this condition exacerbating further, even in toddlers

New Delhi, 18 November 2017: As per recent statistics, the incidence of Computer Vision Syndrome ranges from 64% to 90% among computer users. About 60 million people globally suffer from this condition, with another million new cases occurring every year. According to research, our blinking frequency, which is supposed to be 15 to 20 times per minute, goes down by approximately 60% while using a computer.

Computer Vision Syndrome refers to a group of eye and vision-related problems that result from the prolonged usage of computers, tablets, e-readers and cell phones. The level of discomfort apparently increases with the amount of digital screen use.

Using a computer or staring at a screen for prolonged periods can cause symptoms such as dryness, watering, and itching in the eyes, blurred vision, headaches, neck and back pain.

Speaking about this, Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement, said, "Screen usage has increased everywhere today, be it among students or adults. Even toddlers are given mobile phones to watch videos and cartoons, etc. When we gaze at any screen, the eyes converge to focus on a point and this position is maintained for longer periods of time. On an average, a person spends about 4.4 hours of leisure time in front of screens. Add to this, the 8 to 10 hours spent on laptops and desktops in offices. That is how pervasive this phenomenon is. When a person is focusing on the screen, the eyes move back and forth. In an office setting, one may need to also look down at papers and then back up to type. The eyes react to changing images on the screen to create so the brain can process what is seen. All this puts a lot of strain on the eye muscles. To make things worse, unlike a book or piece of paper, the screen adds contrast, flicker, and glare."

Uncorrected vision problems like farsightedness and astigmatism, inadequate eye focusing or eye coordination abilities, and aging changes of the eyes, such as presbyopia, can all contribute to the development of visual symptoms when using a computer or digital screen device.
Adding further, Dr Aggarwal, said, “Another issue is that people often use their mobiles before they go to sleep. This can disturb sleep and also put a lot of stress on the eyes and the brain. It is better to listen to good music or even meditate an hour before hitting the bed. The first step to prevention is an awareness of the problem. There is a need to consciously wean ourselves away from screens.”

The following tips can help prevent computer vision syndrome.

- It is good to take a full one-week social media holiday if you are addicted to various social media.
- Everybody should have 30 minutes of electronic curfew before they sleep. This means not using mobile phones and other mobile devices for 30 minutes before sleep.
- Use mobile only when mobile.
- Limit mobile talk time to less than 2 hours a day.
- Once the battery is discharged, call it a day for mobile use.
- Follow the formula of “20-20-20” to prevent dry eyes: every 20 mins, focus the eyes on an object 20-feet (6 meters) away for 20 seconds or close the eyes for 20 seconds, at least every half hour.
- Spend less than 3 hours on a computer at a stretch.

-Ends-

About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

For further information please contact:
Sanjeev Khanna - 9871079105
Md Adib Ahmad – 9873716235
mediaimahq@gmail.com
IMA Public & Media Advocacy Cell