



Photophobia

The Following Information has been Prepared for You:

Photophobia is an abnormal, painful sensitivity to or intolerance of light. Photophobia can be caused by more than 50 medical conditions. Dry eye is the most common cause, followed by migraine headaches, medications, concussion or brain trauma. Among medications, those used for chemotherapy are particularly prone to photophobic side effects. Other medications may cause pupil dilation, such as those used for attention deficit an decongestants.

Generally, light colored eyes (green and blue) are more sensitive than darkly pigmented eyes. Certain wavelengths of light are more problematic than others. Fluorescent lights cause invisible flicker that your brain can detect. Blue-green lights are also problematic. Blue light emitted from most electronic devices can interfere with a person's sleep patterns by reducing the body's natural secretion of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. It is recommended to avoid looking at electronic screens 2-3 hours before bedtime. When possible, use the "night mode" on your electronic screens, and decrease the overall brightness of the screens. Tinted or blue-blocking eyeglass lenses can block or decrease exposure to blue light.

Migraine attacks can be triggered by flickering lights, repetitive patterns, stripes, glare, bright reflections, electronic and television screens, and movie theaters. About 85% of migraine sufferers experience photophobia either during or between migraines.

Autism, multiple sclerosis, lupus, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and epilepsy are medical conditions that can also cause photophobia.

Since traumatic brain injuries and concussions cause photophobia, a large segment of veterans and athletes experience sensitivity to lights.

Overwearing soft contact lenses is another cause of photophobia.

What can you do?

Wear good quality polaroid sunglasses outdoors. Your sunglass frame should sit close to the face and prevent excess light from entering on the side of the lenses. If you use prescription glasses, use anti-reflective and blue-blocking lenses. Ensure you have annual vision exams, update your prescription eyewear regularly and replace your contact lenses as directed by your Optometric Physician.

If you use LED screens, dimming them actually causes more invisible flicker, so keep them at close to 100% brightness or adjust the white balance to make the light a warmer tone (red tones are better for you than blue tones). Likewise, use warm-toned overhead lightbulbs (avoid cool white light bulbs). Halogen bulbs are best, since they emit the lowest levels of blue light, while closely mimicking natural daylight.

Contact our office with any significant vision changes or emergencies that you feel require immediate attention.

Please Rate the Information You Received

	☐ Very helpful - all questions are answered ☐ Somewhat helpful - I still have questions ☐ Not helpful – none of my questions were answered
Comments / Questions / Typos:	

Provider Contact Information

Family Eye Care & Pediatric Vision Center, PLLC
Melissa Holliman, OD

David Holliman, OD
Brandon Holliman, OD

1203 N. Eastman Rd
Kingsport, TN 37664
Phone: (423) 274-3321
Fax: (423) 247-3631
FamilyEyecareKingsport@gmail.com
Website: DrHolliman.com