



EYESIGHT

Game Over for Eyes: The Link Between Excessive Gaming and Chronic Dry Eye

In recent years, the world of gaming has experienced tremendous growth, captivating millions of players worldwide. While gaming can offer critical thinking and strategy skills, it is important to recognize and understand the potential negative effects associated with excessive screen time. Concern about the potential effects of excessive gaming to your overall eye health is the development of dry eye syndrome, a condition that can lead to discomfort, visual disturbances, and a decrease in overall eye health.

What is Dry Eye Syndrome?

Dry eye syndrome is a common condition that occurs when the eyes fail to produce sufficient tears or when tears evaporate too quickly. Tears provide lubrication, reduce the risk of eye infection, wash away foreign matter in the eye and keep the surface of the eyes smooth and clear. However, when dry eye syndrome occurs, it leads to symptoms such as redness, itching, burning sensations, and blurry vision.

Causes of Game-Induced Dry Eye

Prolonged Screen Time:

- Engaging in gaming sessions for extended periods of time exposes the eyes to

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continuous screen glare, resulting in reduced blink rates and inadequate lubrication of the eye's surface.

Reduced Blink Rate:

- Gamers often become so engrossed in their gameplay that they unconsciously decrease their blink rate. Infrequent blinking hampers the distribution of tears, leading to dryness and discomfort.



Environmental Factors:

- Gaming environments are often characterized by poor lighting, low humidity, and air conditioning, all of which contribute to an increased risk of dry eye.

Symptoms of Game-Induced Dry Eye

Eye Discomfort:

- Dry eyes often manifest as a feeling of grittiness, burning, or stinging in the eyes. Gamers may experience these symptoms during or after gaming sessions.

Redness and Irritation:

- Insufficient tear production and prolonged screen exposure can cause redness and irritation in the eyes, making them appear bloodshot and swollen.

Blurred Vision:

- Dry eyes can lead to blurred or fluctuating vision, making it difficult for gamers to focus on the screen accurately.



Prevention and Management

Take Regular Breaks:

- Incorporate short breaks into gaming sessions to allow your eyes to rest. Follow the 20-20-20 rule, where every 20 minutes, look away from the screen and

focus on an object at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This helps reduce eye strain and encourages natural blinking.

Blink Consciously:

- Be mindful of blinking while gaming. Make a conscious effort to blink frequently to keep the eyes lubricated and moist. Consider using preservative-free artificial tears or lubricating eye drops to alleviate dryness. Avoid eye drops that “take the red out.”

Adjust the Gaming Environment:

- Optimize the lighting conditions in your gaming space. Avoid excessive glare and ensure proper lighting to reduce eye strain. Consider using an anti-glare screen protector for your monitor.

Maintain Eye Hygiene:

- Keep your eyes clean and free from irritants. Avoid touching or rubbing your eyes while gaming, as this can exacerbate dryness. Use a warm compress to soothe any discomfort or dryness.

While gaming can be an enjoyable and a completely immersive experience, it is important to be aware of the potential impacts on eye health. Balancing gaming activities with regular breaks, optimizing the gaming environment, and implementing proper eye care practices are key to maintaining eye health and enjoying gaming experiences without compromising vision and comfort. By adopting preventive measures and practicing good eye hygiene, gamers can minimize risk and alleviate dry eye symptoms. Remember, taking care of your eyes is essential for a healthy and enjoyable gaming experience.

The Eye Institute (TEI) offers a variety of services to treat patients experiencing symptoms of gaming induced dry eye syndrome including comprehensive eye exams, specialty eyewear solutions and vision therapy.

To schedule an appointment at TEI, call [215.276.6111](tel:215.276.6111).

Dr. Susan Oleszewski: 2023 Looking Out for Kids Lighthouse Award Winner



According to Dr. Susan Oleszewski one has a lot of good ideas in a lifetime. But they don't always turn out like one would want.

"Dr. O," as she is affectionately known, during her four decades of involvement with the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) at Salus University and The Eye Institute (TEI), had one of those good ideas around 2006 that turned out to be even better than she could have anticipated.

That idea was the "Looking Out for Kids" (LOFK) vision care initiative, which has provided comprehensive vision care services and eyeglasses to children from Philadelphia and its surrounding school districts. Since its first fundraising event in 2007, every dollar raised at the annual charity event has gone directly to providing comprehensive vision care services and eyeglasses to some of the most vulnerable

kids in the region through TEI.

"We had that first event and it's grown every year after that," said Dr. O. "For someone who had the initial vision, it's quite gratifying."

And, for her longtime dedication to the initiative, Dr. O has been named the 2023 LOFK "Lighthouse Award" winner. She was presented with the award at the annual event on Nov. 11, 2023.

The Lighthouse Award is given to those who are considered beacons of light and sources of strength in the community in which they live, work, and serve above and beyond their occupations. Recipients are honored for their extraordinary service that substantially benefits the health and well-being of disadvantaged and underserved children and youth in the greater Philadelphia area.

"It's gratifying that the institution is acknowledging my efforts in this regard. It's a lovely testament and I'm quite happy about it," said Dr. O.

For nearly four decades, Dr. Oleszewski — one of only four women in her graduating class and a giant in PCO/Salus history — held significant roles at the University. A native of Derry, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Pittsburgh, Dr. O attended Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, as a biology major. She then went on to receive her Doctor of Optometry degree from PCO and a master's degree in biology from Temple University. She completed her residency at PCO where she was among the first group of residents to work at TEI when it initially opened in 1978.

In her career, she served in a variety of didactic, clinical and administrative capacities. Over time, she gradually assumed additional



administrative responsibilities, first as chief of Primary Care Service at TEI and then as the associate dean for PCO and director of Clinical Services.

In 2005, she was named vice president for Patient Care Services. During her time in that role, Dr. O shepherded the more than \$11-million dollar renovation of TEI, which was completed in 2012. The following year, she was appointed chief of staff at the University and then finally served as the vice president for Institutional Advancement and Community Relations until 2018.

In 2018, Dr. Oleszewski was presented with Salus University Alumni Association's Special Recognition Award. Past recipients of the award have included both organizations and individuals who have significantly contributed to Salus, their profession or community. In 2019, at the Centennial Gala for PCO, Dr. O was presented with the Presidential Medal of Honor. This award is given to distinguished alumni, faculty, and friends of the College who have helped establish PCO/Salus as a pioneer and leader in the field of optometric education and the profession of optometry as well as the other professions at Salus.

Even without Dr. O at the head, LOFK continues to be strong. She cites the involvement of Dr. Brandy Scombordi-Raghu, pediatric optometrist at TEI and coordinator of the School

Vision Programs, which takes the Salus mobile healthcare unit — known as the Big Red Bus — to area schools to conduct screenings and comprehensive exams as critical to the continued success.

"One of the things that's gratifying to me, if you feel so strongly about something, then you can't carry it by yourself. You have to find people who will follow along with you, will embrace the challenge," she said.

Dr. O believes the future success of this initiative will hinge on the institutional support for it as well as making sure that those people who are involved in it have a fire in their belly to continue and overcome any obstacles in their way. "This is about taking care of kids' vision. End of story," she said.

How Can I Help?

"Looking Out for Kids" funds are used to provide direct care services to children in need in Philadelphia and its surrounding communities.

To learn more about LOFK and donate, please visit [SalusUhealth.com/LOFK](https://www.SalusUhealth.com/LOFK)

SALUS UNIVERSITY

The Eye Institute

The Eye Institute (Oak Lane)
1200 West Godfrey Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19141
Appointments: 215.276.6111

The Eye Institute (Chestnut Hill)
Chestnut Hill Plaza
7630 Germantown Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19118
Appointments: 215.276.6111

The Eye Institute (Norristown)
1401 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401
Appointments: 610.278.7787

[Salushealth.com/eye-institute](https://salushealth.com/eye-institute)

SALUS UNIVERSITY

Pennsylvania Ear Institute

Pennsylvania Ear Institute
8380 Old York Road, Suite 120
Elkins Park, PA 19027
Appointments: 215.780.3180

1200 W. Godfrey Avenue
(Oak Street Health Entrance)
Philadelphia, PA 19141

[Salushealth.com/pennsylvania-ear-institute](https://salushealth.com/pennsylvania-ear-institute)

At Salus University's health facilities, The Eye Institute, Pennsylvania Ear Institute, and Speech-Language Institute compassionate doctors, clinicians, and support staff have dedicated their lives to improving the health and well-being of our community.

If you have a caregiver who has made a meaningful impact on your life, please consider sending them a note of gratitude and making a charitable gift to the clinic in his or her honor. Although the amount of your contribution remains confidential, your Healthcare Hero will be notified of your honorary gift and he or she will be given special recognition.



Honor your Healthcare Hero

Your gift not only demonstrates deep gratitude for the care you received, but it will play a critical role in enhancing access to care, advancing innovation and improving the patient and client experience in our community.



To donate, visit
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