



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact**

Susan English

Havas PR

412 456 0867 tel

[susan.english@havasww.com](mailto:susan.english@havasww.com)

Smith Wyckoff

Transitions Optical

800 533 2081 x 7540 tel

[swyckoff@transitions.com](mailto:swyckoff@transitions.com)

**Vision Problems Causing Frequent Breaks in Employee Productivity According to Transitions Optical Research**

*Number of breaks to rest the eyes is on the rise*

ORLANDO, Jan. 28, 2014 – The substantial majority of employees are regularly affected by at least one visual disturbance at work that could diminish their performance, with most taking multiple breaks during the day to rest their eyes, according to new research sponsored by Transitions Optical, Inc. The company's annual *Employee Perceptions of Vision Benefits* survey<sup>i</sup> reveals that 79 percent of employees say they encounter at least one visual disturbance that bothers their eyes at work, and more than half (53 percent) admit they take at least one break daily to rest their eyes because they hurt or feel uncomfortable.

"Eye health is critical to staff performance, and is a huge contributor to productivity," said Vincent Young, M.D., who is chairman of the Division of Ophthalmology at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia and presented the new survey results during Transitions Optical's 2014 Academy event. "To work well, you have to feel well. And you can't feel your best if you aren't seeing your best."

The top visual complaint is tired eyes, with nearly half (47 percent) of employees reporting this. About a third of employees are bothered by other problems, including light reflecting off of their computer screen, bright, glaring light, dry eyes and blurry vision. Another 18 percent say their eyes tear, while 16 percent have trouble with light reflected off of personal devices and another 16 percent are bothered by reflections off of outdoor surfaces [TABLE 1]. Employees who

-more-

identify themselves as Hispanic are the most likely to experience visual disturbances of all the ethnic groups polled.

A significant 29 percent of all workers say they suffer from headaches as a result of visual disturbances. According to the National Headache Foundation, headaches cost the nation \$17 billion dollars in absenteeism, lost productivity and medical expenses. The Foundation also reports that while 90 percent of employees say headaches affect their work performance, only 33 percent tell their employers, indicating a potentially bigger issue than employers realize.<sup>ii</sup>

The *Employee Perceptions of Vision Benefits* research also explored times of day when vision problems are most prevalent, revealing that one third (32 percent) of employees' eyes bother them most during the afternoon, followed by evening (24 percent) and morning (8 percent). An additional 17 percent reported that their vision bothers them throughout the day **[TABLE 2]**.

“With so many workers reporting visual disturbances, it’s not really surprising that more than half (53 percent) say they take breaks during the work day to rest their eyes, but it is a bit alarming that when we asked this question in 2011, only 29 percent were reporting breaks,” said Smith Wyckoff, key account manager, managed care/online retail, Transitions Optical. “That means there has been a 45 percent increase in people taking breaks from their workday to rest their eyes in the past two years, potentially a result of today’s employees working longer hours and being exposed to more electronic devices.”

Further demonstrating the negative impact on productivity, most employees are taking multiple breaks throughout the day on account of vision problems. The average employee takes two breaks per day, but nearly one third (32 percent) are taking three or more breaks, and 13 percent are taking more than five **[TABLE 3]**. While women are more likely to say they suffer from visual disturbances at work, men are more likely to say they take breaks because of them.

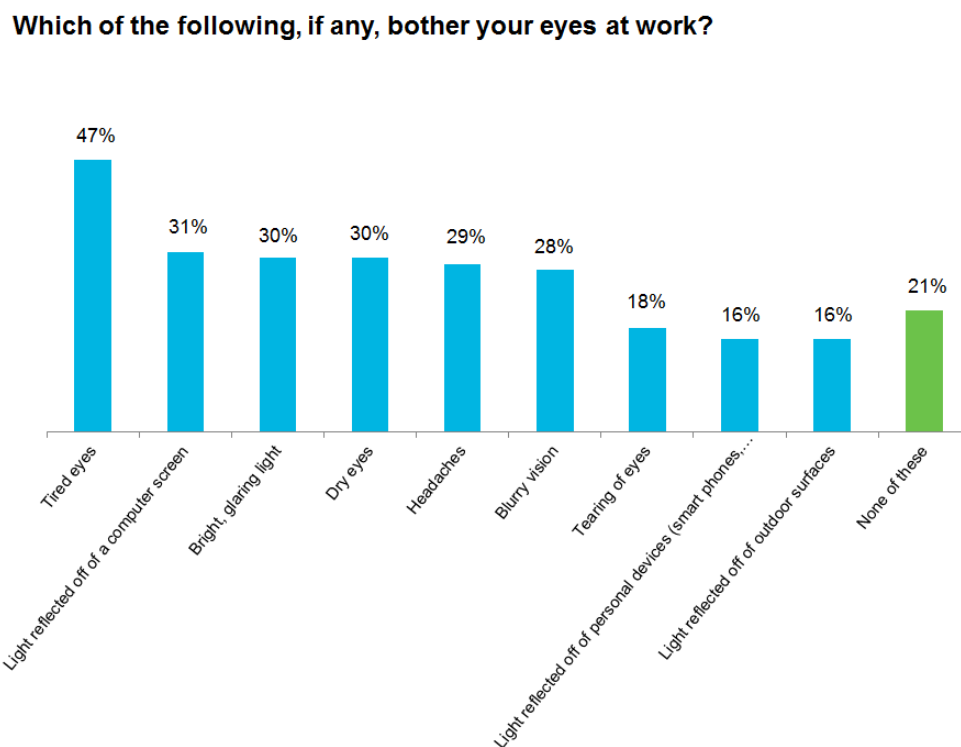
One study shows that eye focusing problems, which can occur with eyestrain and fatigue, may cause employees to lose up to 15 minutes of working time a day. The study reported that this translates into employers losing more than \$2,000 per year per employee who suffers from this issue.<sup>iii</sup>

Many visual disturbances can be alleviated with wearing the right eyewear – including lenses with an up-to-date prescription and lens options, like anti-reflective coatings and Transitions® lenses to reduce glare. Transitions Optical offers a variety of employee- and employer-focused education materials that emphasize the importance of eye exams and quality vision wear for the workforce. These can be accessed free of charge through the [Transitions Healthy Sight Working for You®](#) public education program.

**TABLE 1**

The substantial majority of employees (79 percent) report that they encounter at least one visual disturbance that bothers their eyes at work.

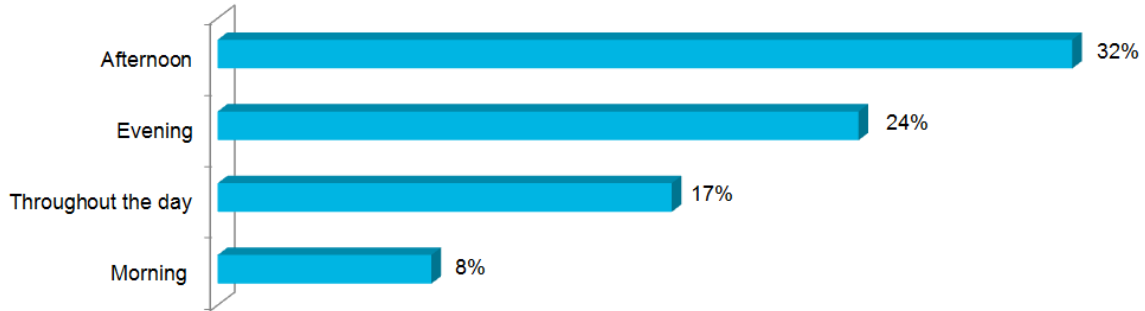
- The most common complaint among employees is tired eyes, which affects nearly half of all workers (47 percent).



**TABLE 2**

Of employees whose eyes were bothered by visual disturbances, most said their eyes are bothered during the afternoon, followed by the evening.

**What time of day do your eyes bother you the most?**

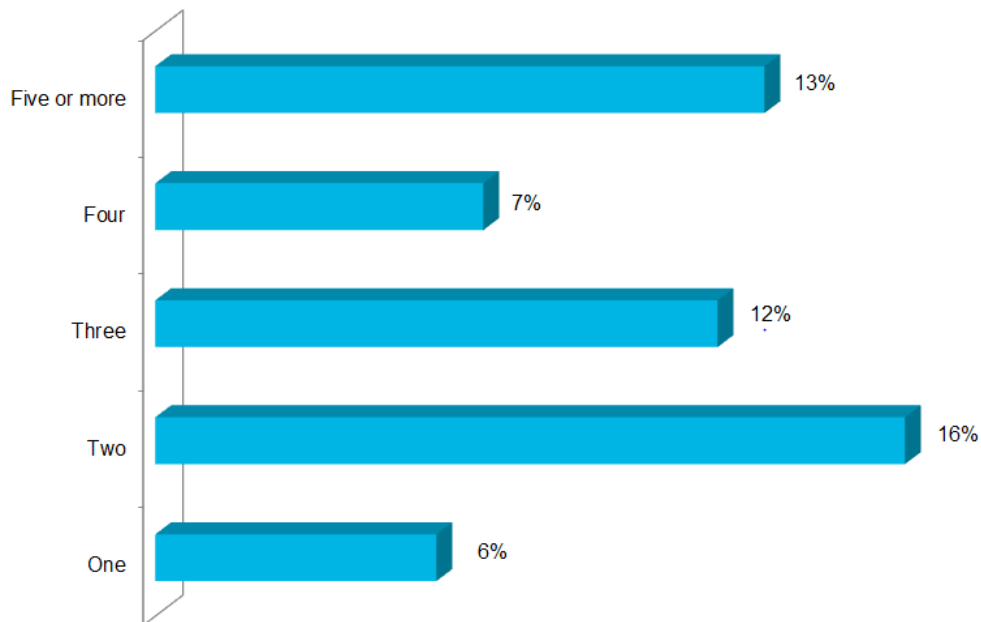


**TABLE 3**

More than half of employees (53 percent) say they take breaks during the work day to rest their eyes because they feel hurt or uncomfortable.

The average employee takes two breaks per day, but nearly one third (32 percent) of employees are taking three or more than two breaks, and 13 percent are taking five or more.

**Approximately how many times per day do you take breaks to rest your eyes because they hurt or feel uncomfortable?**



## **ABOUT TRANSITIONS HEALTHY SIGHT WORKING FOR YOU®**

Transitions Healthy Sight Working for You® is a public education initiative established by Transitions Optical, Inc. to raise awareness of the value of quality vision benefits. Reaching employers, benefits brokers and employees, program outreach focuses on ways that comprehensive vision care and the right eyewear options can help to manage health care costs and increase productivity. Complimentary vision savings calculators and other employee education materials are available through [HealthySightWorkingforYou.org](http://HealthySightWorkingforYou.org).

## **ABOUT TRANSITIONS OPTICAL**

Since Transitions Optical, headquartered in Pinellas Park, Fla., was founded more than 20 years ago, the company has been driven by an innovative spirit and a commitment to partnership. As the leading provider of photochromics to optical manufacturers, Transitions Optical offers state-of-the-art light management technology in virtually every major lens design and material encompassing a family of everyday adaptive lenses and performance sun lenses.

Everyday lens options include Transitions® Signature™ lenses, the most responsive lens with full indoor clarity; Transitions® XTRActive® lenses which provide superior darkness outdoors; and the revolutionary Transitions® Vantage™ lenses, the first and only photochromic lenses to darken and polarize outdoors.

Transitions Optical's performance sunwear line includes a range of products customized in partnership with other best-in-class brands. Understanding that the right equipment can provide an advantage, the products are all designed to improve depth perception, clarify color and increase contrast for specific outdoor activities.

Transitions Optical is dedicated to promoting healthy sight worldwide and to supporting its partners and optical professionals with tools, programs and resources to aid in their individual efforts and help strengthen industry growth. For more information, visit [Transitions.com/Pro](http://Transitions.com/Pro), or contact Transitions Optical Customer Service at (800) 848-1506 (United States) or (877) 254-2590 (Canada).

# # #

---

<sup>i</sup> Survey conducted online by Wakefield Research on behalf of Transitions Optical, Inc. in November 2013, among 1,500 employed American adults whose employers offer vision benefits.

<sup>ii</sup> National Headache Foundation. Headaches on the job prevalent, painful and costly: Employees suffering from headaches at work are less productive, more prone to miss days. July 9, 2008.

<sup>iii</sup> KAZI Personal Control Lighting Study, How personal control lighting can reduce eyestrain, improve productivity, and save energy, KAZI bulletin, Available at: [www.ise-ergonomics.com/pdf/lit-req/Kazi\\_Bus\\_Case\\_hr.pdf](http://www.ise-ergonomics.com/pdf/lit-req/Kazi_Bus_Case_hr.pdf) . Accessed Oct. 21, 2009.