



Vision Therapy Informational Sheet

What is Vision Therapy?

Vision therapy is an individualized treatment used to address certain visual problems such as eye-turns (strabismus), lazy eye (amblyopia), eye focusing problems, eye movement and coordination problems, double vision, and problems associated with depth perception. Vision therapy may also be used to help individuals whose visual-perceptual skills are developmentally delayed or regressed due to a traumatic brain injury, people who suffer from balance or dizziness disorders due to a mismatch between the visual and vestibular system, and people who have difficulty coordinating their body due to poor communication between the visual and motor systems. Vision therapy is not used to correct nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism. Typically, vision therapy is used when either symptoms can't be alleviated by glasses or contact lenses or when the desired goal is to permanently address the underlying problems instead of simply masking symptoms.

What are the symptoms of someone who may need vision therapy?

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•	Lazy eye	•	Inability to shift focus	•	Slow reader
•	Turned eye		Inability to focus up close		Skips words or lines
•	Double vision		Avoidance of near tasks		Trouble with left and right
	Eye drifts in or out		Closes or covers one eye	•	Confuses or reverses letters
	Words move on a page		Inability to concentrate	•	Poor memory
	Headaches or eye strain		Poor reading comprehension	•	Poor handwriting
	Poor balance		Dizziness or vertigo		

Patients needing vision therapy will share many of the symptoms as people who suffer from attention deficit disorder or dyslexia. In some cases, these are co-existing conditions. In other cases, once the eyes are treated with vision therapy, the symptoms are completely alleviated.

How Does It Work?

Vision therapy works similarly to any other type of exercise program. The precise program is tailored to address the patient's symptoms. The exercises are designed to:

- 1) teach the eye muscles how to move accurately and efficiently
- 2) teach the brain how to coordinate the eyes
- 3) teach the brain how to interpret what it sees
- 4) strengthen the muscles responsible for keeping the eyes aligned
- 5) strengthen the focusing muscles to improve their ability to shift focus effortlessly
- 6) improve communication between the visual system and the auditory, motor, and balance systems
- 7) improve the speed that the brain can process and respond to visual stimuli

Like any exercise, the key to success is repetition. Also, like any exercise, the eye muscles may feel fatigued or sore after performing the exercises.



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How Do I Get Started?

Your first step is for us to fully understand your symptoms and to evaluate your visual skills. Please contact our office to set up an initial appointment. Then complete our questionnaire *(please allocate 30 minutes)*.

• A \$75 nonrefundable deposit is required to hold your appointment. The deposit will be applied to your evaluation.

- Your questionnaire must be submitted by the Friday before your appointment or your visit will be cancelled.
- Failure to submit the questionnaire before the deadline or provide 24 hours notice of cancellation will result in the forfeiture of your deposit. An additional deposit would be required to reschedule your appointment.

Initial Evaluation

Everyone considering vision therapy will first need a comprehensive eye exam from their family eye doctor before scheduling an initial evaluation with us. We offer four different types of evaluations to best meet your needs. They consist of the core visual skills assessment, vision-balance-dizziness assessment, vision and cognition assessment, and the brain injury assessment. Each evaluation is comprised of two to five appointments depending on which assessment is selected and includes a conference to discuss the results.

How to Determine Which Type of Evaluation is Best for You

Please use the below table of symptoms to help you decide which type of evaluation is most appropriate. If during the course of a core visual skills evaluation, the doctor determines that one of the other three types of assessments would have been more appropriate, you will have the ability to upgrade to one of the other types of evaluations, the additional testing needed will be scheduled for a subsequent day, and you will be responsible for the difference in the evaluation costs. If you have any questions, please reach out to our vision therapy administrator for further guidance.

Submitting your patient questionnaire early will help ensure that you are scheduled for the most appropriate evaluation.



Core Visual Skills Assessment

Symptoms Include ...

Amblyopia/Lazy Eye Double Vision (Chronic) Eye-Fatigue or Strain Eye Turn/Strabismus Focusing Disorder Headaches Poor Eye Movements Poor Depth Perception **Reading Difficulty**



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Vision and Cognition Assessment

Symptoms Included in the Core Visual Skills Assessment and ...

Poor Eye-Hand Coordination Memory or Concentration Issues Suspicion of Dyslexia Poor Hand-writing Poor Left-Right Awareness **Reverses** Letters **Difficulty Following Directions** Difficulty Attending to Details Cannot Read Silently – Subvocalizes

Vision, Balance, and Dizziness Assessment

Symptoms Included in the Core Visual Skills Assessment and ...

Poor Balance Difficulty Walking a Straight Line Dizziness Vertigo

Brain Injury Assessment

All Symptoms Included in the Other Three Assessments and ...

History of Concussion/TBI History of Fall History of Vehicle Accident Double Vision (Acute) Severe Light Sensitivity





How Much Time Do I Allocate for the Initial Evaluation?

The Core Visual Skills Assessment

Please allocate 80 minutes for your initial evaluation with the doctor to determine how well visual information reaches the brain. Once all the data is collected, a 40-minute conference will be scheduled to discuss the results of the assessment and recommended treatment plan.

Vision-Balance-Dizziness Assessment

Please allocate 80 minutes for your initial evaluation with the doctor to determine how well visual information reaches the brain. A second doctor appointment will be scheduled to assess how effectively the visual system and vestibular (balance) systems communicate and to determine what lens options best restore balance and minimize dizziness. This appointment may take up to 40 minutes. Once all the data is collected, a 40-minute conference will be scheduled to discuss the results of the assessment and recommended treatment plan.

Vision and Cognition Assessment

The Vision and Cognition Assessment requires one 80-minute evaluation with doctor and two visits with our vision therapist/assistant to complete. The evaluation with the doctor will evaluate how well visual information reaches the brain while the two visits with our vision therapist/assistant evaluate how well the brain processes the visual information it receives. Please allocate 2 hours for the first visit with our vision therapist/assistant an additional hour for the second visit. Because the vision-information-processing tests are not timed, the total duration needed for testing depends on the pace of the patient. Once all the data is collected, a 40-minute conference will be scheduled to discuss the results of the assessment and recommended treatment plan.

Briain Injury Assessment

The Brain Injury Assessment requires one 80-minute evaluation with doctor to determine how well visual information reaches the brain, another 40-minute evaluation with the doctor to assess how effectively the visual system and vestibular (balance) systems communicate with each other, and two appointments with our vision therapist/assistant to evaluate how well the brain processes the visual information it receives. Please allocate 2 hours for the first visit with our vision therapist/assistant and 1 to 2 hours for the second visit. Because the vision-information-processing tests are not timed, the total duration needed for testing depends on the pace of the patient. Once all the data is collected, a 40-minute conference will be scheduled to discuss the results of the assessment and recommended treatment plan.

Which Skills are Tested in the Initial Evaluation?

The skills tested depend on which initial evaluation is selected. The below table details which skills are tested based on the assessment selected.

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Skills Assessed	Skills Assessment	& Dizziness Assessment	Cognition Assessment	Assessment
Number of Appointments Needed	2	3	4	5
Binocular Vision-Optimizing Refraction	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Eye movement control	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Focusing accuracy and flexibility	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Eye alignment, coordination, and depth perception	~	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
Visual-Vestibular (Balance) Integration	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark
Vestibular Processing Screening	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark
Motion Sensitivity and Optic Flow Testing	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark
Midline Shift and Visual Neglect Testing	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark
Retention of Primitive Reflexes	×	×	\checkmark	\checkmark
Dyslexia Determination Test	×	×	\checkmark	×
Laterality and Directionality	×	×	\checkmark	×
Reversal Awareness	×	×	\checkmark	\checkmark
Oral Reading Test	×	×	\checkmark	\checkmark
Visual-Motor Integration	×	×	\checkmark	\checkmark
Visual-Auditory Integration Testing	×	×	\checkmark	\checkmark
Visual-Perceptual Skills Battery (visual discrimination, spatial relations, visual closure, and visual memory)	×	×	✓	~

Conference

If the patient is a minor, we will schedule an **in-person** conference to discuss the results with **both parents** and to give them an estimate of the duration and cost of therapy. Length of therapy ultimately depends on the initial symptoms, how engaged the individual is during therapy, and whether the individual completes the home therapy assigned each week. It is essential that both parents attend the first conference in-person because everyone needs to be on board for the therapy to be successful. If all decision-makers are not able to attend the original conference together, additional conference times (including in-person, phone, or Zoom) can be purchased and are subject to availability. Subsequent conferences may be scheduled remotely.



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Report

A comprehensive report will be provided at the conference. This report will detail the testing performed, the specific visual abilities evaluated, and how the patient performed. It will discuss the implications of visual dysfunction on performance in academic, work performance, sports and daily activities and will make recommendations for remediation of the visual problems. At your request, copies of the report will be made available to the school and other professionals currently caring for the patient. You must attend a conference to receive a written visual skills report.

How Does Scheduling for Vision Therapy Work?

Patients are scheduled with one of our vision therapists to receive one to two forty-minute therapy sessions per week depending on the patient's needs. The appointments are scheduled on the same day and time every week to ensure consistency. Consistency and engagement are key to successful therapy. As such, we can only accept patients that are able to make this time commitment.

How Much Does Vision Therapy Cost?

The cost of therapy varies based on the diagnosis and severity of the condition. A more exact quote will be shared with you at the consultation.

Are There Alternatives to Vision Therapy?

Yes; however, often the alternatives mask the symptoms without solving the actual problem itself. In some cases, special glasses can be made to wear in certain situations to reduce symptoms. However, the patient may be dependent upon these glasses and the condition would continue to persist. Vision therapy is the only way to cure the condition itself. Surgery can cosmetically align the eyes, but will not improve functional vision, can decompensate (resulting in multiple surgeries), and can make functional therapy more difficult.

Is It Successful?

Yes! Scientific research has shown that vision therapy can help people see more clearly, efficiently, and more comfortably. Success depends on the patient's motivation and willingness to adhere to the program schedule which includes keeping appointments and performing exercises at home. Below is a sampling of 42 peer-reviewed journal articles supporting vision therapy. A more comprehensive list is available upon request.

^{1.} A Joint Organizational Policy Statement of The American Academy of Optometry and the American Optometric Association. Vision Therapy: Information for Health Care and Other Allied Professionals. 1999.

^{2.} A Joint Organizational Policy Statement of the American Academy of Optometry and the American Optometric Association. Vision, Learning, and Dyslexia. 1997.

^{3.} American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association for Pediatric Opthalmology and Strabismus, American Academy of Opthalmology. Position statement on learning disabilities, dyslexia, add/adhd and vision. Pediatrics, 90(1):124-125, 1992.

^{4.} American Optometric Association. Definition of optometric vision therapy, St. Louis, MO, June 1991.

^{5.} American Optometric Association. Fact sheets on optometric vision therapy, St. Louis, MO, June 1992.



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