

> VISION REHABILITATION NEWS



SIGNS OF FUNCTIONAL VISION PROBLEMS

specialized testing and treatment to impact patients overall health



Functional vision problems can significantly impact overall health and well-being, extending far beyond visual acuity. The key here is that routine eye exams by most eye doctors are not designed to test for functional vision problems. As Developmental Optometrists, we provide specialized testing and treatment for functional and developmental vision disorders for patients of all ages.

Some vision problems can result in compensatory postures—leaning forward, head tilting, neck straining—resulting in chronic headaches, neck pain, and upper back tension. Eye strain can manifest as whole-body fatigue, as the constant effort to process unclear visual information depletes energy reserves and contributes to sleep disturbances.

Patients may complain of double vision or words appearing to move on the page. This can be very frustrating and also trigger migraines. When vision is compromised, the brain works harder to process

visual information, affecting concentration, memory, and cognitive processing speed. Peripheral vision problems also impact balance and spatial awareness, increasing fall risk and creating unsteadiness that affects movement confidence.

Vision difficulties often lead to frustration, anxiety, and decreased self-confidence. People may avoid previously enjoyed activities, leading to social isolation and potential depression. The fear of missing social cues or appearing awkward creates chronic stress that affects sleep quality and stress hormone levels.

In addition, children and adults who have difficulty reading or using a computer, can often be mistaken for having attention problems, when it could be due to eye tracking, eye focusing or eye coordination deficits. Reduced reaction time, light sensitivity, motion sickness, headaches as well as severe anxiety relating to driving and even grocery shopping can often be connected with visual deficits.

Some of their symptoms are easier to relate to vision than others, such as blurred vision, especially with seeing up close or double vision. However, the symptoms that relate to decreased peripheral vision are often overlooked. Reduced peripheral vision can contribute to difficulties with driving, balance, walking, reading, shopping and playing sports.

If you have any questions or would like to schedule an in-service for your team, please feel free to call our office or send an email Lindsay at: lindsay@sdvisions.com



POST-CONCUSSION VISION DISORDERS INTERFERE WITH RECOVERY AND IMPACT QUALITY OF LIFE

Post-concussion patients often have many quality-of-life issues and concerns that they do not realize are due to visual sequelae related to their injury. For example, not being able to focus on work, difficulty reading or using a computer, reduced reaction time, light sensitivity, dizziness, headaches as well as severe anxiety relating to driving and even grocery shopping.

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Reduced peripheral vision can contribute to difficulties with driving:

- *Driving at night*
- *Gauging the speed of oncoming traffic*
- *Recognizing unexpected events on the sides of the road*
- *Difficulty seeing objects clearly and judging distance*



In addition to driving, we actually use our peripheral vision for almost all our activities of daily living including walking, reading, shopping and playing sports. Typically, most of the mTBI patients we see in our office do not have any difficulties with their central vision. This is why many of these patients have been told their vision is fine by other providers – they pass the visual acuity test with no difficulty.

While many visual field defects like hemianopsia may be seen on a static peripheral field test, functional restrictions of the visual field (i.e., neglect) are often present despite a normal field test. However, regardless of the etiology, we are able to help these patients to improve their quality of life.

As Neuro-Developmental Optometrists, we have many options in diagnosing and treating reduced peripheral vision. Typically, lenses can help those who have actual loss of peripheral vision, and functional deficits can often be rehabilitated with Neuro-Optometric Vision Rehabilitation which includes the use of prism, phototherapy or an in-office program.

We continue to see excellent outcomes in our mTBI patients who were previously struggling with post-trauma visual sequelae. Please email Lindsay to receive a symptom checklist: lindsay@sdvisions.com

CHECK OUT OUR FREE IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS:



Double Vision,
Field Neglect,
Dizziness and Motion
Sickness:
The Visual Connection

Post Trauma
Vision Syndrome:
A Co-Management
Approach

Vision Development
Problems in the Special
Needs Population

These workshops are available on a limited basis, as our doctors' schedules allow. For more details or to schedule your free in-service program, please call our office and ask for Lindsay or email: lindsay@sdvisions.com

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

When you refer a client to our office, please use our Functional/Developmental Evaluation referral form so we are able to keep you informed of your client's progress. For more information, a referral form or a weighted symptom checklist to assist in identifying potential Functional and/or Binocular Vision disorders, please email our Patient Care Coordinator, Lindsay at: lindsay@sdvisions.com