

What is Vision Therapy?



Vision is much more than just seeing 20/20. If there is a vision disorder unrelated to clarity, it may make working, learning, sports and hobbies significantly more difficult. Struggling students and hardworking adults may fall behind if their visual demands are overwhelming.

Vision therapy is appropriate for treatment of tracking and reading fluency problems, poor focus and/ or attention, visual processing issues, convergence insufficiency, traumatic brain injury, strabismus, amblyopia, and many more vision conditions that can be present at any age.

Vision therapy is also very valuable training for enhancement of sports performance. A customized vision training program will improve visual abilities and train the eyes and brain to work together more effectively. Our behavioral optometrists and vision therapists focus on each person as a whole and the various stressors that may affect their visual system. Through a structured program of vision therapy, we work with patients to develop the crucial visual skills necessary to reach academic, athletic, and professional goals.

Vision therapy programs typically consist of 45 minutes of in-office therapy per week with assignment of additional home practice activities. Specific visual activities will be prescribed for the patient depending on the skills needing improvement. This allows for specialized care to meet each patient's needs and constant modification to support achievement of desired goals.

Symptoms of Visual Stress - There are many signs of a visual system not working optimally. Inefficient visual skills or those that have not properly developed may result in:

- **Headaches:** Pain or discomfort, often concentrated around the eyes or across the forehead, but also may occur in the back of the head.
- **Discomfort or fatigue:** Tension, stress or weariness (especially concentrated around the eyes) after visually demanding work.
- **Double vision:** Seeing two images when there should only be one.
- **Suppression:** The brain may ignore or "turn off" the signal from one eye in order to avoid confusing information.
- **Poor coordination:** Deficient eye-hand coordination often reveals itself through poor handwriting, general clumsiness, or poor sports performance.
- **Performance below expectations:** In school, work, hobbies or sports.

If you have any questions regarding vision therapy, please feel free to reach out to us. We are dedicated to developing visual skills to allow everyone to reach their potential. Highline Center for Vision Performance stands ready to offer additional information and solutions.

Visual Skills - Skills we develop through vision therapy include:

- **Visual acuity:** The ability of an eye to see clearly, both at distance and near. Vision is much more than being able to see 20/20.
- **Binocularity:** The ability of both eyes to work seamlessly together and send identical information to the brain simultaneously.
- **Tracking:** The ability to efficiently and accurately track along a line of print. This is a crucial skill for reading fluency.
- **Focus/near visual acuity:** The ability to keep print clear for near work. This skill includes the ability to change focus between distance and near quickly, efficiently and without experiencing blur.
- **Attention:** The ability to mentally maintain focus on a task with ease for an extended period of time.
- **Depth perception:** 3D vision, or the ability to judge the distance between objects in three dimensional space.
- **Visual information processing:** This includes a number of skills, all of which influence whether a person can make sense of what they've seen. Visual memory is one important example of these skills. It is essential for accurate spelling and remembering what one has read.
- **Visualization:** Being able to create a mental image. A few examples include forming a picture in your mind of what you are reading or imagining yourself performing well in an upcoming race. This skill is crucial for enjoyment of reading, efficient learning, and optimal sports performance.