



VIRGINIA NEURO-OPTOMETRY

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WORKER'S COMPENSATION INFORMATION FOR MEDICAL AND PHYSICIAN-SUPERVISED VISION THERAPY SERVICES

What is neuro-optometry?

Neuro-optometry is a subfield of optometry that focuses on the evaluation and functional rehabilitation of visual complaints and impairments including double vision secondary to acquired brain injury (concussion, trauma, stroke, etc) and/or neurologic disease (Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis, etc). Over 50% of the brain is involved in processing vision. The ability to "see" requires not just adequate eye health and refractive prescription, but extensive coordination of the eyes, the brain, and the body. A comprehensive neuro-optometric examination can evaluate the specific neurological impairments that are causing a patient's visual symptoms. Treatment is aimed at overcoming barriers to the patient returning to work and activities of daily living like computer work, grocery shopping, and driving, as well as provide evidence-based treatment options to enable the patient to rehabilitate or adapt their visual environment to their specific needs.

Who would benefit from a referral to a neuro-optometrist?

If your patient/client has symptoms of dizziness, nausea, headache, disorientation, fatigue, double vision, blurry vision, and/or light sensitivity triggered by visual tasks like the computer, reading, driving in a car, watching television, or when in visually crowded environments like the grocery store or workplace, they would benefit from an evaluation.

What treatments do you offer?

The most common types of treatment include prism glasses and/or neuro-optometric vision rehabilitation. Unlike other practices, Virginia Neuro-Optometry does not have an optical nor make revenue on glasses, so the patient can be reassured that if glasses are recommended it is sheerly for the patient benefit. Recent studies have shown that active vision rehabilitation can expedite recovery of post-traumatic brain injury oculomotor dysfunction, which means the patients symptoms will resolve faster and they can return to work/life sooner if the oculomotor dysfunction is diagnosed and rehabbed appropriately.

How is Dr. Theis's practice different from other optometrists and ophthalmologists?

Jacqueline Theis, OD, FAAO is the only optometrist in the state of Virginia with residency-training and clinical research experience in neuro-optometry and double vision after brain injury. After completing her residency and 4 years of optometric training at the University of California at Berkeley, School of Optometry, she has spent the last decade teaching, performing clinical research, and clinically practicing specifically with patients who have visual complaints after acquired brain injury. From her extensive clinical experience she has created a revolutionary patient-centered model for rehabilitation.

To accommodate patients with brain injury, her vision rehabilitation program is home-based with telemedicine and in-office follow ups every 1-3 weeks to ensure compliance, cost-effectiveness, and progress for the patient. On average her patients notice improvement in symptoms within 1-3 months, and average resolution of symptoms is 3-6 months, but can take up to 12 months. Every brain injury is different – some patients rehab within 4-6 weeks, some patients take up to 12+ months. While Dr Theis cannot predict which patient will recover sooner rather than later, she is able to actively and objectively monitor progress of the patient. Rehabilitation is geared towards either full recovery or consistent plateau in objective oculomotor metrics with compliance to rehabilitation.

