

PART 2:

How To Maximize Your Results With The See Clearly Method



Maximizing Your Results With The See Clearly Method

To accelerate your progress with the See Clearly Method, we recommend the following:

1. Minimize your use of glasses and contact lenses, only when it is safe to do so. (See “Using Glasses and Contact Lenses With The See Clearly Method,” page 60.)



SAFETY REMINDER: *Do not remove glasses or contacts or do eye exercises while driving a motor vehicle, using power tools, going up or down stairs, or engaging in any other potentially dangerous activity or any other activity that requires clear eyesight.*

2. Use a technique called progressive undercorrection, which involves using weaker prescription glasses or contacts when it is safe to do so. (See “Progressive Undercorrection,” page 61.)
3. Emphasize certain exercises for your particular vision condition. (See “Recommendations for Specific Vision Conditions,” page 65.)
4. Maintain a positive attitude. (See “The Power of Positive Attitude,” page 69.)
5. Adjust your diet, as necessary. (See “Diet and Vision,” page 70.)

Using Glasses and Contacts With The See Clearly Method

Although “corrective lenses” (glasses and contacts) make things clearer by refocusing light before it enters the eyes, they usually create dependency. If you continue to wear your current prescription, it can interfere with the benefits of doing the See Clearly Method exercises and significantly slow down your progress. Therefore, we advise you to wear them as little as possible. Use them as a tool – put them on only when you need them, and take them off when you don’t need them to see.

Always wear “corrective” lenses for potentially dangerous activities or any activity that requires clear eyesight, such as driving, crossing the road, cooking, or using power tools. When you finish the activity, take them off, provided it’s safe to do so. Break the habit of always wearing your glasses or contacts. This applies to almost any visual problem, unless your vision is really poor.

Spending time without “corrective” lenses is one of the best ways to increase your natural focusing power. Cultivate the habit of leaving them off for longer periods of time, and you’ll find there are lots of things you can do well without them, even if your vision is not as clear as you’d like it to be. However, if your vision is so bad that you can’t see much of anything without glasses, we strongly recommend a technique called “progressive undercorrection” (see next page).

Determining When You Can Go Without Glasses or Contacts

To help you determine when you might be able to not wear your “corrective” lenses, take a minute to answer the following questions:

1. Are there activities you can do safely without glasses? Are there times when you are doing any of these activities while wearing glasses?
2. Are there activities you can do without glasses by adjusting your distance, e.g., from the TV, computer, reading material, etc?

Progressive Undercorrection

Progressive undercorrection is a process of making step-by-step reductions in your prescription strength as a means of shifting toward more clear vision. This process can be repeated until you are completely free of “corrective” lenses or have obtained the maximum amount of improvement possible. The process is the opposite of how you may have arrived at your current prescription – letting increasingly strong lenses compensate for progressively poorer vision – but usually happens faster and with fewer changes in prescription.

You may not need to go through this process. It depends on the severity of your vision condition and your vision improvement goals. (See “Realistic Goals and Strategies for Using Corrective Lenses,” page 62.)

If you choose to do this process, you may be able to use weaker pairs of glasses from previous years. If not, you will need to see an eye doctor. In order to get an undercorrected prescription, ask your eye doctor – before making an appointment – if he or she is willing to give you a prescription with a visual acuity between 20/30 and 20/40 (he or she may not be familiar with the term “progressive undercorrection”).



SAFETY REMINDER: *Only use an undercorrected prescription when reading, watching television, or doing other safe activities. Don't use an undercorrected prescription while driving a motor vehicle, using power tools, going up or down stairs, or engaging in any other potentially dangerous activity that requires clear vision.*

With the undercorrected prescription, objects will appear slightly blurred at first. Over time, however, as you work with the See Clearly Method you will probably notice objects becoming clearer with your undercorrected lenses. You may then be ready to reduce your prescription further.

If you wear contact lenses, consider using disposables. The cost of changing prescriptions will be much less.

If your doctor isn't familiar with behavioral aspects of vision care (natural vision therapies), you could find resistance to your requests for weaker lenses, since this is not the traditional optometric practice. Your doctor is expert at examining your eyes, prescribing "corrective" lenses, and checking for signs of eye disease. However he or she may not be familiar with the principles and techniques of the See Clearly Method, and you may need to be persistent in order to get what you need.

If you have difficulty finding an eye doctor willing to give you an undercorrected prescription, look for a local optometrist who offers "vision therapy" or "visual training." We may be able to refer you to an eye doctor, willing to give you an undercorrected prescription, in your area; call a See Clearly Method consultant at (toll free) 877-232-3598 Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm Central time.

Realistic Goals and Strategies for Using "Corrective" Lenses

If your sight has just started to deteriorate:

You may be able to return to normal and avoid or delay the need for "corrective" lenses for many years.

If you've just started wearing "corrective" lenses:

Spend as much time as possible without them. As long as

your vision does not get worse, you will not need to do progressive undercorrection.

If your prescription is weak:

Spend as much time as possible without them. As long as your vision does not get worse, you will not need to do progressive undercorrection.

If your “corrective” lenses are medium or strong:

You can probably gain a substantial amount of freedom from them, and may eventually get rid of them altogether. Taking the route of progressive undercorrection could significantly accelerate your progress when combined with the See Clearly Method exercises. You should also try to spend as much time as possible without “corrective” lenses. For example, if you’re nearsighted, try to do all your reading and computer work without “corrective” lenses, even if it means getting slightly closer than usual.

If you wear bifocals:

If you have trouble seeing things close up and wear bifocals but can pass the state driver’s vision test (i.e., your visual acuity is 20/40 or better), try to go back to single vision lenses and wear them as little as possible. If you can’t go back to single vision lenses, consult with your optometrist to get a pair of glasses with reduced powers in both sections of the glasses.

If you want to prevent your vision from getting worse:

Stabilizing your vision and avoiding the expense of a stronger prescription usually takes a month or so and may be the best course of action if you have poor eyesight or don’t want to spend much time exercising your eyes. Although stabilization may not sound very exciting, many

people with poor eyesight are worried about their vision getting even worse and are happy just to stop the downward spiral into stronger prescriptions. If this is your goal, you can continue to use your current prescription as long as your vision stays the same.

If your goal is to reduce or eliminate your need for “corrective” lenses:

Wearing your current prescription may make achieving this goal more difficult, so minimize your use of “corrective” lenses, as explained earlier. Also, if you have a medium to strong prescription, do progressive undercorrection.

Recommendations for Specific Vision Conditions

Usually, most people with poor vision have one or more of the following conditions: eyestrain, nearsightedness, farsightedness, presbyopia, or astigmatism. The following advice for your condition will be useful in maximizing results. Please note that you should practice ALL the exercises and techniques, but do more of those recommended for your specific condition.

Nearsightedness (Myopia)

- Nearsightedness is a condition in which a person sees near objects better than distant objects.
- Develop the habit of breaking up long sessions of reading or computer work by looking away every few minutes at a distant object, or doing some extra Blinking, Pumping, Palming, or Acupressure. Remember to follow the 20/20 rule – do 20 seconds of an exercise every 20 minutes.
- Avoid using your full prescription glasses or contacts for reading or computer work. Do this even if it means holding the page slightly closer than usual or getting a little closer to the screen. (However, reading too close or working too close to the computer screen can hinder your progress by creating new stresses. The same goes for TV viewing and video games.)
- If your vision is so bad that you just can't read or work at a computer without glasses, use the weakest pair you can get by with.
- Emphasize these exercises: Pumping (page 9); Clock Rotations (page 13); Eye Rolls (page 15); Fast Blinking (page 17); Slow Blinking (page 18); Squeeze Blinking (page 18); Blur Zoning (page 19), and these Relaxation Techniques: Palming (page 35), Acupressure (page 29), Light Therapy (page 34), and Hydrotherapy (page 36).

Farsightedness and Presbyopia

- Farsightedness and presbyopia are conditions in which a person has difficulty focusing on near objects.
- Presbyopia is primarily associated with people over the age of 40 and is thought to be related to the aging process.
- Try to read without glasses—or use the weakest pair you can see with.
- Emphasize these exercises: Pumping (page 9); Tromboning (page 11); Clock Rotations (page 13); Eye Rolls (page 15); Fast Blinking (page 17); Squeeze Blinking (page 18), and these Relaxation Techniques: Palming (page 35), Acupressure (page 29), Light Therapy (page 34), and Hydrotherapy (page 36).

Astigmatism

- Astigmatism is a condition in which images appear blurred and distorted, usually at all distances, because of uneven focusing of light inside the eye. It is usually caused by asymmetric demands on vision, that is, using the eyes unequally or unevenly, and not in all directions.
- Doing the See Clearly Method exercises, and Clock Rotations (page 13) and Eye Rolls (page 15) in particular, will help develop free and easy eye movements in all directions. This reduces the amount of head scanning you do (moving your head instead of your eyes when you shift your focus from one object to another).
- Try to do a similar amount of vertical (up and down) and horizontal (left and right) scanning during the day. For example, if you are an accountant who checks columns of numbers, you should do some of the checking by moving your eyes side to side and an equal amount going up and down.

- Have as much of your visual work placed directly in front of you so that you are not working off to one side too much of the time.
- Emphasize these exercises: Clock Rotations (page 13); Eye Rolls (page 15); Pumping (page 9). With Clock Rotations, practice going between the 12 o'clock and 6 o'clock positions, and then 9 and 3. Do the relaxation techniques like Palming if your eyes become sore; then resume doing exercises when the soreness goes away.

Computer Eyestrain and Vision-Related Headaches

- Modify your work routine to break up long sessions of reading or computer work and prevent nearpoint stress from building up. When working on the computer, take periodic breaks, look away every few minutes at a distant object, or do one or more eye exercises (e.g., Slow Blinking, Palming, or Acupressure). Remember the 20/20 rule – do 20 seconds of an exercise every 20 minutes.
- Do a Slow Blink every few minutes, and set a goal of doing 100 Slow Blinks per day. It may be helpful to keep a written record using the “bars and gates” method, as illustrated below. Add a bar to the gate for each slow blink.



- Emphasize these exercises: Pumping (page 9); Clock Rotations (page 13); Eye Rolls (page 15); Fast Blinking (page 17); Slow Blinking (page 17); Squeeze Blinking (page 18); and Blur Zoning (page 19), Palming (page 35), and Acupressure (page 29).

NOTE:

Due to FDA regulations, we are unable to provide you with an eye patch. However, you can get one from your local drugstore.

Using an Eye Patch for Specific Vision Conditions

There are several ways you can use an eye patch to enhance the results of the See Clearly Method. Wearing an eye patch while doing focusing exercises can be a powerful technique because it encourages each eye to work separately.



SAFETY REMINDER. *Don't wear an eye patch when driving, crossing a road, going up or down stairs, using power tools, cooking, or doing other potentially dangerous activities or activities that require depth perception or clear vision.*

1. If one of your eyes is noticeably weaker than the other, do the focusing exercises (see page 43) with the strong eye patched part of the time.
2. If one eye is nearsighted and the other is farsighted, do the focusing exercises with one eye patched, then the other. You will do an exercise differently depending on which eye is patched. When the nearsighted eye is patched and you are exercising the farsighted eye, the object you look at during the exercise will be close to you; when farsighted eye is patched, the object you look at will be further away.

If you use an eye patch, we recommend always doing the focusing exercises without the eye patch part of the time, because you want to develop the eyes' ability to work together.

The Power of Positive Attitude

Modern medical science acknowledges that the mind exerts a tremendous influence on the body. It has been demonstrated time and again that our expectations and desires actually affect the body's ability to overcome illness and heal itself – that positive thoughts and expectations can support the body's natural ability to heal itself. In our experience, one of the most powerful predictors of a person's success with the See Clearly Method is their attitude. That is, if you're optimistic and open to new ideas you're more likely to achieve success with the program.

One way to maintain a positive attitude as you do the See Clearly Method is to set realistic goals and track your progress as we have described in the Daily Progress Journal. The sense of accomplishment that comes from accomplishing goals and seeing that your vision is improving will help you stay inspired and motivated.

Another way to harness this natural power and apply it toward better visual health is to repeat an affirmation, i.e., a positive statement that embodies your vision improvement goals. Select one or more of the affirmations below, and say it aloud or think it to yourself as often as possible during the day. You can also make up your own affirmations. It helps to write your affirmations on slips of paper or post-its and place them where you can't miss them at home and at work, until you are able to internalize and think of them automatically.

I am seeing better each day.

I can see without my glasses.

My eyes feel comfortable and relaxed.

I can see objects in the distance more clearly.

I feel positive changes in my vision taking place.

I can see clearly now, the strain is gone.

Diet and Vision

Not surprisingly, good nutrition plays an important role in the health of the eyes. A poor diet decreases your overall ability to effectively respond to stress. Different types of nutrition problems can lead to an array of conditions that may set the stage for chronic, debilitating visual conditions, including cataract and macular degeneration.

It has been shown that a diet consisting of too much sugar intake can result in a decrease in the range and flexibility of the visual mechanism of accommodation. The visual mechanism of accommodation is what you use to change your focus from distance to near and back again. When this mechanism loses range and flexibility, more effort is required of the visual system when performing close-up tasks for sustained periods of time. This extra effort can trigger processes that lead to eye elongation and the type of nearsightedness that can be very difficult to either slow down, stop, or reverse at all. But a balanced, sensible diet helps enable your eyes to get the nourishment they need to perform properly.

Avoiding junk food is a good way to cut down on empty calories and excess sugar. Following dietary guidelines such as those of the American Cancer Society and National Institutes of Health is a good way to ensure that you are receiving proper nutrition. Their recommendations are as follows:

- Eat less fat.
- Eat less sugar.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Do not add salt to your food.
- Eat whole grain cereals.

- Do not use alcohol or tobacco.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.

In addition, various herbs, vitamins and minerals are considered to have beneficial effects.

Frequently Asked Questions: Part 2

Vision Conditions

Q. What should I do if I have a question about how to address a specific vision problem or condition?

A. We're not in a position to answer questions about specific visual problems or conditions. If you have any such questions, you should contact an eye doctor licensed in your state. If you want a referral to an eye doctor in your area, call our See Clearly Method consultants toll-free at 877-232-3598, Monday-Friday, 9 am – 5 pm Central time.

The See Clearly Method is designed to help people with common visual problems like eyestrain, nearsightedness, farsightedness, presbyopia, and astigmatism. If you have one or more of these problems, we recommend you do Exercise Sessions and New Visual Habits on a daily basis (see “What You’ll Do Each Day” page 42). You can also do more of those exercises recommended for your specific condition (see page 64).

Q. Can the See Clearly Method help eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataract, or macular degeneration?

A. The See Clearly Method was not conceived as a treatment of these conditions. You should be under the care of an eye care practitioner for these conditions. We recommend working with an optometrist familiar with behavioral approaches to vision care. Ask them when and how you might work with the See Clearly Method.

Q. Both my parents are nearsighted. Does this mean my nearsightedness is inherited?

A. Although nearsightedness seems to run in families, it is not known to what degree myopia is actually inherited or to what degree the lifestyle of the myopic parents is reinforced in their children. However, if you could see well as a child, it's likely that you were born with normal, healthy eyes.

Q. What causes myopia?

A. In most cases, myopia (nearsightedness) is caused by stress on the focusing mechanism of the eyes resulting from extended periods of reading, working at a computer, or other close-up visual activity. It is often accompanied by a poor diet. Over time these factors may trigger physiological processes which can result in changes in the physical structure of the eyes.

Q. I wear really thick glasses. Will the exercises help me?

A. Yes, but if you've been wearing glasses for decades and have a strong prescription, don't expect to get rid of them entirely. A more realistic goal is to be able to function well with a significantly reduced prescription.

Q. Can these exercises help a lazy eye or crossed eyes?

A. The See Clearly Method was not conceived as a treatment for these conditions. You should be under the care of an optometrist who offer vision therapy and who understands the developmental and behavioral aspects of vision. You can ask the optometrist when and how you might work with the See Clearly Method.

Use of Eyeglasses/Undercorrection

Q. What does my prescription mean?

A. In general, the larger the number, the worse your eyesight. A plus sign in front of the number means far-sighted or presbyopic. A minus sign in front of the number means nearsighted (myopic). If a second decimal number, an “x”, and another number follow in sequence after the first number, you have astigmatism.

Q: How can weaker prescriptions be used to improve your eyesight?

A: One technique we recommend for strengthening the eyes is called “progressive undercorrection.” This is the process of adapting to weaker glasses or contact prescriptions as your eyes become stronger and need less assistance. Done properly, the newly prescribed lenses should give you no worse than 20/40 acuity in each eye. The process is the opposite of how you arrived at your current prescription – letting increasingly strong lenses compensate for progressively poorer vision. **For your safety, you should never drive, use power tools, go up or down stairs, or engage in any other potentially dangerous activity using a weaker prescription.** Use an undercorrected prescription only when reading, watching television, or doing other safe activities. Do not use a weaker prescription unless your doctor confirms that you can see well enough to do so safely.

If your eye doctor isn't familiar with the developmental and behavioral aspects of vision care, you could find resistance to your requests for a weaker prescription, since this is contrary to the usual pattern of prescribing stronger lenses. If you have difficulty finding a supportive eye doctor, look for a local optometrist who offers “vision

therapy” or “visual training.” We may be able to refer you to a supportive eye doctor in your area; call the See Clearly Method referral network at (toll free in US/Canada) 877-232-3598 Monday-Friday, 9 am – 5 pm Central time.

For more information on progressive undercorrection, see page 61.

Q: What is the best way to use “corrective” lenses – glasses and contact lenses - in conjunction with the See Clearly Method?

A. Although “corrective” lenses make things clearer by refocusing light before it enters the eyes, they usually create dependency. For this reason, we advise you to wear “corrective” lenses as little as possible. Always wear them for potentially dangerous activities or any other activity where you must have clear vision, such as driving, crossing the road, cooking, using power tools, etc. When you finish the activity, take them off, provided it’s safe to do so. Break the habit of just leaving your glasses or contacts on all the time. For more on the use of “corrective” lenses, see page 60.

Q: As my vision improves, will I have to keep getting weaker and weaker prescriptions?

A: If you follow the See Clearly Method as directed, chances are good that you’ll soon improve your vision to the point where either you don’t need your glasses or contacts or you need a weaker prescription. If you need a weaker prescription, we strongly recommend doing progressive undercorrection. For an explanation of progressive undercorrection, see page 61.