

Stroke can affect vision



The following vision symptoms can occur as a result of a stroke:

- An inability to see one side of the surroundings.
- Bumping into objects or people on one side.
- Difficulty locating objects which seem obvious to others.
- Ignoring food on one side of a plate or shaving one side of the face.
- Seeing double or objects appearing to be hazy or blurred.
- Difficulty moving through crowded areas.
- Suffering from increased glare sensitivity or difficulty making out detail in dimly lit situations.
- Changes in ability to read or in the appearance of print.
- Getting lost in familiar environments.
- Difficulty in recognising objects or faces.

Up to 30% of people who have a stroke have an associated neurological visual impairment. The presence a vision impairment following a stroke can have significant adverse effects on the rehabilitation outcomes.

Surprisingly, this often goes unnoticed by the patient and sometimes undiagnosed by therapy staff, unless a comprehensive screening of visual function forms part of the rehabilitation program.

Our ability to see and to understand what we see is a very complex process involving not just the eyes, but many parts of the brain as well. The exact nature of stroke related vision changes is dependent on the location and extent of the area damaged by the stroke.

Homonymous hemianopia is one of the more common vision impairments following a stroke. Someone with this condition has difficulty seeing one side of the surrounding environment, or will report that one side may appear different from the other. This condition can account for the difficulty in locating objects, reading, carrying out personal care tasks and decreased safety when walking in busy areas or crossing roads. In short, many tasks that are part of everyday activities that we need to carry out at home and in the community.

NVT SYSTEMS can help in the following areas:

- Firstly by providing a comprehensive visual assessment of visual fields and visual perception.
- Providing information to help the person and their carers better understand the nature of the vision changes.
- Working as part of a multidisciplinary team to include vision therapy as part of a holistic approach to rehabilitation.
- Developing a rehabilitation program designed to maximise the use of remaining vision, using the NVT scanning device.
- Providing scanning strategies to allow for increased safety and confidence in mobility at home and in the community.

NVT SYSTEMS draws upon the expertise of vision therapists who have worked in the area of neurological vision impairment for over 20 years.

In addition to providing vision rehabilitation to patients they can also provide a comprehensive training program to staff working in the area of stroke rehabilitation covering:

- An understanding of the effects of an Acquired Brain Injury on the vision system.
- An understanding of additional cognitive deficits associated with an Acquired Brain Injury and their implications for safe, independent mobility.
- Training in the use of the NVT Scanning Device as an assessment tool for determining the presence of Homonymous Hemianopias and or visuo-spatial neglect.
- A programme of compensatory scanning exercises that will enhance the patient's functional use of residual vision.
- Skills that will enable the Rehabilitation Therapist to transfer these scanning strategies to the patient's home and community setting.
- Skills that will enable the Rehabilitation Therapist to accurately determine the need for a mobility aid and /or restrictions to travel limits.

For more information on this unique program contact:

Gayle Clarke, 440 N Wolfe Road, Sunnyvale. CA 94085

gclarke@nvtstems.com.au

A NEW DIRECTION IN NEURO VISION REHABILITATION

www.nvtstems.com.au

