

# The Best Method for Regaining Eyesight After Stroke

April 9, 2018



When it comes to **regaining eyesight after stroke**, you might be tempted to head to the optometrist. And while the optometrist can help, *they might only fix the symptom instead of the real problem* – and that's not the best way to go. To help you out here, we're going to discuss the real cause of vision problems after stroke and how to fix it.

## Why Does Eyesight Get Worse After Stroke?

When stroke affects your brain's vision center, like with [cerebellar strokes](#) or occipital lobe strokes, eyesight can get worse. There are two ways this can happen:

1. Your brain cannot control your eye muscles anymore.

When stroke damages your **neuromuscular control** (meaning, you cannot control your eye muscles), then you might develop problems associated with eye coordination, like double vision. Neuromuscular problems **do not mean that your eyes are broken**. Rather, your brain just needs healing.

## 2. Your brain cannot interpret visual information anymore.

When stroke damages the part of your brain that interprets visual information, then you might develop problems like central vision loss and visual field loss. During **central vision loss**, you cannot see the middle of your visual field. During **visual field loss**, you cannot see sections of your visual field.

For example, **we know a cerebellar stroke survivor who could not see anything on his left side when he was having his stroke.** That's a visual field cut. Again, this does not mean that your eyes are broken. Instead, we need to focus on healing the brain.

## How Some Friendly Optometrists Might Help

Your instinct might lead you to an optometrist about your vision. And while some friendly optometrists can help, they typically want to prescribe you with glasses and send you on your way. And while glasses are a great short-term fix – because they let you see and safely live your life – they shouldn't be the last step on your journey.

**Your goal should be to regain your vision without the need for compensation techniques like glasses.**

## Improving Your Vision Naturally

Did you know that you can actually improve your vision with eye exercises (9/21/2015 article) and vision therapy? **If you have problems with neuromuscular movement**, then **eye exercises** can help retrain your brain how to coordinate your eye muscles. In due time, after lots of repetitive practice, your vision will improve.

Or, **if you have problems seeing your visual fields**, then **vision therapy** can help retrain your brain to see properly.

You can find vision therapists under the practice of “neuro-optometric vision rehabilitation.” Here's [a link to a Google search](#) so that you can find one in your area.

## The Best Way to Improve Your Vision

The key to seeing the best results is *repetition* and *consistency*. The more you practice your eye exercises, the more you activate *neuroplasticity*, the mechanism that your brain uses to rewire itself. The more you repeat your exercises, and the more consistent you are with your practice, the better your results will be.

Recovery = neuroplasticity + repetition + consistency

## How Long Will This Take?

As you begin your vision rehabilitation, you might wonder how long you'll have to do this. **It's important to keep in mind that vision improvement is very, very slow!** So if you don't see results right away, stick with it. Some people see small improvements within a month. Some take a few months to see results. It all depends on your unique situation.

Natural vision improvement will be a true test of your faith and discipline. Decide that this is something that you want *badly*, and then put in the work. Be patient, and have faith in the process.

## Summary: 5 Steps for Regaining Eyesight After Stroke

Let's wrap up this lesson on vision improvement with a short step-by-step guide on what to do next:

1. Talk to your doctor or neurologist about your vision problems, and see an optometrist if they refer you to one
2. If your optometrist prescribes glasses, wear them
3. In the meantime, [research neuro-optometric vision therapists in your area](#) and begin your practice
4. If you don't have access to vision therapy, try our eye exercises at home
5. See your vision therapist and/or practice your eye exercises often – the more reps the better

This formula is simple, but it requires hard work. But if you keep up with your practice, then you'll be well on your way to getting your eyesight back.