Eschenbach Low Vision Training Program

Module 9: Low Vision Patient Training

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The Seven Steps to Dispensing Low Vision Aids®

1. Make sure the patient is under the current care of an eye doctor and has a current refraction
2. Identify the patient’s visual goals
3. Determine the magnification required
4. Demonstrate the impact of illumination
5. Select the appropriate vision aids for the goals identified
6. Train the patient in the use and care of the chosen vision aid
7. Schedule a follow-up visit
Value of Training

When patients are given accompanying and appropriate training, about 96% continue to use devices prescribed to them. Experienced LV practitioners recommend a training model with multiple sessions when at all possible.
General Training Principles

• Short sessions, increasing to longer
• Easy materials, increasing to harder
• High contrast materials, increasing to poorer contrast
• Try to use materials that are relevant and of high interest to the patient
Considerations for Training Set-Up

• Patient Needs
  – Consider occluding the worse eye
  – Use of their glasses, bifocals or reading glasses

• Environmental
  – Good illumination
  – Minimize or eliminate glare

• Ergonomic
  – Posture
  – Reading stand, adaptive devices
Low Vision training involves teaching the patient to:

1) Use optical devices correctly
2) Use illumination and contrast enhancement correctly
3) Use eccentric viewing (if needed)
Training on the Correct Use of Optical Devices
Remember!

• A bigger lens is usually a weaker lens
• The stronger the lens, the shorter the focal length (the closer the object must be held to the lens)
Eye-to-Lens Distance

The closer the lens is held to the eye, the larger the field of view (the more words and lines of text) the patient will see.
Eye-to-Lens Distance

The further the lens is held from the eye, the smaller the field of view (fewer words and lines of text will be seen).
Rules for successful use of low vision aids
Hand-held Magnifiers

1. Hold the magnifier parallel to the object being viewed. Use at the correct focal distance. Initially, it is often helpful to hold the magnifier in the spectacle plane to learn focal distances.
Stand Magnifiers

1. Hold stand magnifier firmly against object
2. Hold stand magnifier lens at appropriate eye-to-lens distance
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Spectacles

1. Hold material at focal length of magnifying spectacles*
2. Move material across field of view, parallel to spectacles rather than moving head
Video Magnifiers

1. Get in good ergonomic position
2. Locate the object to be viewed under camera
3. Enlarge the print to a size that is easily readable
Video Magnifiers

4. Compare various viewing modes and determine patient preference

5. Move object beneath camera, side to side to cover desired field of view
Telescopic Devices

Hand-held monoculars:

1. First view the object without the monocular
2. Place the monocular before the sighting eye
3. Locate object to be viewed through telescope
4. Focus on object
Telescopie Devices

Hand-held monoculars:

5. Remember, the more powerful the monocular the more difficult it may be to find object due to reduced visual field size.
Telescopic Devices

Binocular telescopes:

1. Locate object to be viewed through telescope
2. Close (or cover) the worst eye and focus the open eye
3. Repeat for the better eye
Telescopic Devices

Binocular telescopes:

4. Caution the patient to move the head slowly in the beginning when changing from one object to another.
Maintenance of Devices

• Clean lenses with a drop of water, soapy water, or lens cleaner from an optical shop
• Blot gently with a soft cotton cloth or microfiber cloth
• Try not to use tissues or paper towels—they scratch a lens
• Do not use cleansers—they take the finish off the lens
• Do not immerse lenses in water
Training on Illumination
The role of Improved Illumination:

Patients with poor contrast sensitivity often require 3 to 10 times more light than normally sighted individuals.
More important than the wattage or type of light is the **position** of the light

- at or below eye level
- off to the side of the object
- remember the “inverse square law”
Contrast Enhancement and Eccentric Viewing
Discuss the role of Enhanced Contrast in every room for every task:

- Kitchen—pouring, measuring, cutting
- Bathroom—bathing, grooming, shaving
- Closet—picking out clothes
- Outlets and switches—plugging something in or turning on a light
Eccentric Fixation Training

• In many low vision problems the patient must be taught to use peripheral or off-center vision for various tasks
• Begin by teaching them where to look
• Then hold their head steady, and move the text across the eccentric viewing point.
Eccentric Fixation Training

• Begin with the appropriate optical low vision aid, preferably held in the spectacle plane
• Bring the continuous text reading material to the appropriate focal distance
• Instruct the patient to “stare” at the point where they can identify the first word
• Then scroll the print slowly before the eye
Alternate Eccentric Fixation Training Technique

• Tell patient to think of the object being viewed as a clock face

• Have the patient look off-center at the different numbers until get best view
Questions?
Thank You!