

A Miracle Cure for Headaches?

Years of suffering caused by vertical heterophoria may be relieved with eyeglasses

When her brother-in-law, Dr. Arthur Rosner, complained of persistent headaches, optometrist Dr. Debby Feinberg suspected a rarely diagnosed condition called vertical heterophoria and prescribed special new glasses.

The simple cure worked.

So well, in fact, that Rosner realized some of his long-suffering ENT patients might benefit from the same treatment.

Nearly a decade later, Feinberg has helped more than 500 patients overcome symptoms ranging from migraine headaches and nausea to light sensitivity and carsickness.

Sound like a miracle cure?

"It's not brain surgery," Feinberg says modestly. "But vertical heterophoria is not a common thing to measure for, so it's often not discovered. Most of our patients have suffered with this for eight to 10 years."

With vertical heterophoria, one eye sees an image higher than the other eye. In trying to correct the vision, the brain forces the eyes to align, which, in turn, can cause enormous strain on the eye muscles, resulting in severe headaches, blurry vision, vertigo and even acute anxiety in large spaces like malls.

Feinberg's patients at Vision Specialists of Birmingham fill out a detailed screening questionnaire, undergo a specialized eye exam and, if appropriate, receive new glasses. Relief can be immediate, but some patients require adjustments for a few months for maximum relief.

Word of Feinberg's treatment is spreading, and she looks forward to teaching others her technique.

"There's nothing better than helping people get their lives back," Feinberg believes. "I have to share this."