

# Homonymous Hemianopia



The Royal  
Society for  
the Blind ®



## What is Homonymous Hemianopia?

The ability to see is a complex process involving the eyes and the brain. Both parts must be working for us to see. A Homonymous Hemianopia is caused by damage to the visual pathway in the brain, usually in the occipital lobe on one side. People often think that they have lost the vision in one eye. In actual fact they have lost half the vision in both eyes. Damage to the right occipital lobe will affect the left visual field and conversely damage to the left will result in a right visual field loss.

Reading has its own set of difficulties. People with Homonymous Hemianopia have difficulty finding the end of a line when they finish one word and have to move their eyes to the start of the next word of the line. Since we read from left to right, people with Homonymous Hemianopia have difficulty shifting their eyes from one word to the next and may miss the end of the line. This makes reading a very frustrating experience.

**Reading view with right Homonymous Hemianopia**



# Signs of Homonymous Hemianopia

Despite a significant change to their vision, individuals are often unaware of their loss and they may have difficulty with the following:

- Eating – only eating food on one side of the plate
- Dressing – shaving and applying make up to the whole face
- Finding or seeing objects
- Pouring hot drinks
- Reading – missing all or part of a word or moving from one line to the next
- Avoiding objects or people on one side
- Finding their way around
- With balance or depth perception
- Moving about in busy areas
- Crossings roads and missing street curbs

If you have any concerns about your vision such as the above, please contact your eye care professional or The Royal Society for the Blind (RSB).



# Intervention

The staff at the RSB have considerable expertise in rehabilitation for people with vision loss.

Depending on individual needs, rehabilitation can include a combination of occupational therapy, orientation and mobility training, and prism spectacles.

Occupational Therapists teach strategies to improve reading, personal grooming, dressing, eating and food preparation skills.

Orientation and Mobility Instructors teach scanning techniques to improve confidence in road crossings, public transport use and independent travel.

Your eye care professional is able to assess and prescribe an appropriate prism spectacle for this condition. Prisms assist to increase a person's visual function.

**For further information about RSB services please contact your local RSB office or client toll free number on 1800 675 554.**



**Vision affected by right  
Homonymous Hemianopia**



**Normal vision**

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