

## **Introducing Debby Feinberg, O.D.**

**A specialist in the treatment of Severe Headache and Dizziness caused by a little understood condition – Vertical Heterophoria**

In order for people to see a single image, the brain must align the two individual eyes so that they are looking at exactly the same point. If this does not occur, unclear or double vision will result. The human body does not tolerate unclear or double vision well at all, and will do whatever it can to create a single clear image.

Vertical heterophoria is a condition where the two eyes have significant difficulty in aligning to look at the exact same point. The unclear image that is created is not tolerated by the brain - it forces the eyes to try and align properly. The resulting stress and strain on the visual system frequently causes severe headaches, and a feeling of being disoriented, off-balanced, lightheaded or dizzy. Other symptoms may include double or overlapping vision, unsteadiness while walking, poor depth perception, tightness or pain in the back of the neck or shoulders, motion sensitivity, light sensitivity, blurred vision with near activities, and anxiety. Even feeling dizzy when riding in a car or being overwhelmed when in a large store can be indicators that a patient may have vertical heterophoria.

Dr. Debby Feinberg has worked with over 500 heterophoria patients since she started specializing in this area of optometry eight years ago. She originally became interested in heterophoria in 1982, when, as a student at the Illinois College of Optometry she had her first experience with a patient in the clinic who had this condition. By using special prescription lenses, the patient was able to see normally once again. Over the years, Dr. Feinberg has continued to perfect her technique of treating heterophoria patients. She is one of just a small number of optometrists that are skilled in treating this condition.

“Very little is taught about the diagnosis and treatment of vertical heterophoria to either optometry or medical students,” says Dr. Feinberg. It is not uncommon for patients to spend months or even years seeking out many different doctors, having many tests done and trying many different medications and therapies, usually with minimal or no improvement. Dr. Feinberg has addressed this situation by creating a questionnaire that helps physicians identify those patients that have the condition and that would be helped by optometric consultation. **Most patients with vertical heterophoria improve dramatically with special prescription lenses.** She now receives referrals from ENT physicians / otolaryngologists, family practice physicians, pediatricians, neurologists, psychiatrists, physical therapy physicians, emergency physicians, and chiropractic physicians.

On July 6, 2004, Dr. Feinberg opened a new practice in Birmingham at 700 N. Old Woodward. If you or a family member is experiencing symptoms of heterophoria, or if you are simply looking for a caring and dedicated optometrist, I recommend that you contact Dr. Feinberg at (248) 258-9000 or [VSofB.com](http://VSofB.com).