



Drexel University

Pennsylvania College of Optometry

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Researchers at the Forefront on Breakthrough Concussion Study

Elkins Park, Pa. — A paper titled “The CONCUSS Randomized Clinical Trial of Vergence/Accommodative Therapy for Concussion-Related Symptomatic Convergence Insufficiency” — for which Dr. Mitchell Scheiman, senior associate dean of research at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Drexel University, was the co-investigator — has been published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, the highest-rated journal in sports medicine.

Research shows that 75 percent to 80 percent of individuals with concussions recover well within three to four weeks with routine concussion care. However, the remaining 20 percent to 25 percent experience persisting concussive symptoms and longer recovery periods. Of those people, up to 70 percent develop concussion-related vision problems.

Dr. Scheiman and the study’s principal investigator, Tara Alvarez, PhD, director and founder of the Vision and Neural Engineering Laboratory as well as the director of the undergraduate Biomedical Engineering program at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), aimed to answer two questions: (1) Is vision therapy an effective treatment for concussion-related convergence insufficiency? (2) Is watchful waiting or observation only just as good?

The randomized clinical trial — which was conducted by Drexel, NJIT and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) — began in 2021 and concluded in 2024. Of the 106 patients studied, age 12 to 25, half were assigned to immediate vision therapy and the other half waited six weeks before having any vision therapy. Both groups had regular concussion care from a specialty physician.

The researchers observed a significant difference between the two groups. The immediate group achieved almost an 80 percent success rate in eliminating concussion-related vision problems, while only 10 percent recovered in the delayed group after waiting six weeks before starting vision therapy.

Dr. Scheiman added that he believes the paper published on the study in the British Journal of Sports Medicine will be significant and widely cited because it is the first paper anywhere with high quality data from a randomized clinical trial showing these results. “The study results may potentially change clinical practice,” he said.

About Drexel University

Drexel University is a comprehensive global R1-level research university and experiential learning leader that combines academic rigor with one of the nation's premier cooperative education programs. Drexel integrates education, scholarship, diverse partnerships, and our global community to address society's most pressing challenges through an inclusive learning environment, immersive learning, external partnerships, transdisciplinary and applied research, and creative activity.

About the Pennsylvania College of Optometry

The Pennsylvania College of Optometry on the Drexel University, Elkins Park Campus has pioneered standard-setting innovation in optometric education since 1919. A diversified, globally recognized, professional academic center of learning, it is now a standalone college at Drexel University, upon approval from the U.S. Department of Education in July 2025. For more information, visit [Drexel.edu/elkinspark/PCO](https://drexel.edu/elkinspark/PCO).