



American Optometric Association

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OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY

Doctors of optometry (ODs) are the primary health care professionals for the eye. Optometrists examine, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures as well as identify related systemic conditions affecting the eye.

The following paragraphs may be used individually or collectively as modifiers to enhance the definition when appropriate:

Modifier 1: Responsibilities

Doctors of Optometry prescribe medications, low vision rehabilitation, vision therapy, spectacle lenses, contact lenses, and perform certain surgical procedures.

Modifier 1A: Additional Responsibilities

Optometrists counsel their patients regarding surgical and non-surgical options that meet their visual needs related to their occupations, avocations, and lifestyle.

Modifier 2: Education

An optometrist has completed pre-professional undergraduate education in a college or university and four years of professional education at a college of optometry, leading to the doctor of optometry (O.D.) degree. Some optometrists complete an optional residency in a specific area of practice.

Modifier 3: Licensure

Optometrists are eye health care professionals state-licensed to diagnose and treat diseases and disorders of the eye and visual system.

-Approved by the AOA Board of Trustees, June 21, 2005