

## Facts about

# ***Colorado Optometry***

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By law, the practice  
of optometry in  
Colorado includes:

- Diagnosis and treatment of diseases/conditions of the eye.
- Removal of superficial foreign bodies in the eye.
- Post-operative care for surgical patients.
- Writing prescriptions for medications (including controlled substances) for ocular conditions.

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The law also  
specifically states  
that optometrists:

- Must diagnose diseases of the eye.
- Are held to the same standard of care as ophthalmologists.
- Must carry the same level of malpractice insurance as ophthalmologists and other physicians.
- Must refer patients to the appropriate health care provider.  
Depending on the condition, the referral could be to a:
  - family practitioner
  - internist
  - neurologist
  - retinal specialist, or
  - other specialist

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Thus, when treating  
patients, optometrists  
regularly and routinely:

- manage ocular conditions associated with a systemic disease, such as diabetes, hypertension, multiple sclerosis and arthritis – as a few examples;
- prescribe glaucoma medications which can affect heart and lung functions;
- provide before and after care for patients who have had cataract surgery and refractive laser surgery procedures;
- remove superficial foreign bodies in the eye, such as pieces of metal, dirt, paint, wood and even pizza dough!

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