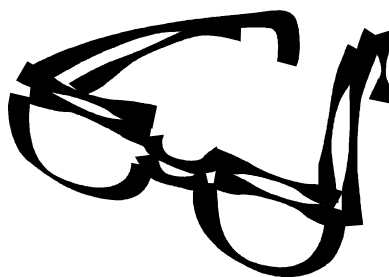




Meares - Irlen Syndrome and Visual Stress



Helpline

0141 - 331 - 2121

www.dyslexiasw.com

What is Meares - Irlen Syndrome?

Meares - Irlen Syndrome is a form of visual stress which leads to difficulties with fine vision tasks such as reading. This eye condition was identified in 1980 by an American psychologist and although the condition is not yet fully understood, it is known to affect reading ability.

The condition affects about 50% of dyslexics, as well as epileptics, migraine sufferers, people with ME and MS, and others. Like dyslexia, it is not curable but can be treated, and significant improvements can be made. For dyslexics, Meares - Irlen can often be the cause of reading difficulty.

Symptoms

The symptoms will have been present throughout your life but some people experience symptoms after a minute of reading, others find the symptoms take longer to appear. The degree of symptoms can also vary from person to person with

more marked symptoms creating barriers to successful reading.



General Problems May Include

- Strain working under bright lighting
- Difficulty finding comfortable lighting
- Glare from bright objects
- Eye strain
- Headaches from reading, working at a computer, watching TV, supermarket lighting.



Symptoms Resulting from Reading may include:

- Poor comprehension
- Skips words or lines
- Reads slowly or hesitantly
- Loses place
- Eye Strain

When reading you may see the words:

- Jumping off the page
- Spinning
- Moving around
- Not staying where they are supposed to



Symptoms Judging Distances may include:

- Clumsiness
- Accident Prone
- Bumps into things
- Difficulty catching small balls

If you have any of the above symptoms, it is advisable to have a standard vision test at your local Optician. If, after the eye test and the appropriate treatment, the symptoms remain, you ought to be tested for Meares - Irlen syndrome.

Treatment for Meares - Irlen

There are a number of treatments for Meares - Irlen syndrome and different people will have different outcomes from treatment. Some can gain significant improvements, some no more than a 5-10% correction. However, some improvement is better than none at all. Treatment for Meares - Irlen will not cure dyslexia, but may improve the ability to read.

Treatment involves the use of colour and simple eye exercises. Coloured overlays and glasses have been shown to lessen the effects of visual stress. Likewise, regular simple exercises to train the eye and increase coordination have had some success as well.

It is important to have an assessment with a licensed Orthoptist and have a course of treatment set that is appropriate. Treatment is highly specialised and needs to be set specifically for you

Where to Go to Be Tested for Meares - Irlen Syndrome

The Visual Stress Clinic at Glasgow Caledonian University carries out a range of clinics examining the vision of people with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties.

The specialised facility, which is the only one of its kind in Scotland, treats problems in children and adults using a variety of techniques to improve their reading, writing and spelling.

The Clinic has carried out award winning research into Meares-Irlen syndrome and has successfully diagnosed and treated many people.

Consultations can be organised in two ways. Firstly, to access the service on the NHS, a referral is required from a GP or educational psychologist (there may be a waiting list). However, as the clinic is separate from the NHS you can simply make an appointment for a consultation yourself, at the cost of about £40.

Contact

The Eye Clinic
Department of Vision Sciences
Glasgow Caledonian University
70 Cowcaddens Road
Glasgow
G4 0BA

Tel: 0141 331 3377/8

Fax: 0141 331 3834

Email: eyeclinic@gcal.ac.uk

www.gcal.ac.uk/sls/Vision/eyeclinic/index.html

Following consultation with our Service users our leaflets are prepared in Comic Sans font, size 14 on coloured paper as this is considered to be the most dyslexic friendly format.

Open daily

Monday to Friday

9.30 am till 4.30 pm

Please phone before visiting our office to ensure that someone is available to see you

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While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this pamphlet, we cannot be held liable for changes that may occur.