

When to suspect CVI

If your child experiences unexplained behaviors or visual difficulties, it's important to consider Cerebral/Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). Based in the brain, CVI is the leading cause of childhood blindness and low vision. But it's often missed. Since CVI is a neurological condition, it often co-occurs with other neurological, neurodevelopmental, and genetic conditions.

What to notice? Individuals with CVI might:



Look at things differently: bring objects close to eyes, tilt head to see something, notice an item brightly colored or only when it moves or lights up, have trouble noticing items at a distance, or shows inconsistent use of vision.



Have trouble finding or recognizing things: not notice new items, lose things that drop on the ground, have trouble finding something in a new or cluttered spot, miss things in certain visual fields, or need verbal cues to find something.



Have trouble interacting with people: mistake a stranger for a family member, only recognize someone by their voice, trouble finding familiar people in photos, not return a smile, trouble making eye contact, or miss gestures.



Get visually tired easily: put head down, get fatigued, or irritable after using vision for a certain amount of time, get overwhelmed, upset, anxious, or have a meltdown in new, loud, or busy places.



Have trouble at meals: hard time finding food on a plate or eating in a busy environment, not reaching for food or a cup, not look at food while eating, or not open their mouth until their food or drink touches their lips.



Need help navigating spaces: trip over clearly visible things, bump into furniture, walk in front of moving objects, not know familiar routes, have trouble moving through crowds, and use caution down steps: drag heels, pause, or tap toes.

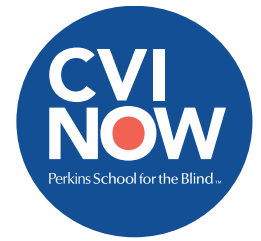


Struggle with school tasks: appears to have a short attention span or is not interested in learning, struggles with reading, math, or writing, reluctant to join a group or participate if it's noisy or loud, or need help finding items in the classroom.

This isn't a full list. Go to **CVINow.org** to learn more.

Suspect CVI?
Next steps





What's next?

If you suspect your child has CVI, we're here to support you. Here are some initial next steps to get you started.

Medical next steps »

Seek out a pediatric ophthalmologist, neuro-ophthalmologist, or optometrist who can evaluate and diagnose CVI. CVINow.org has a growing doctor's list.



Capture videos of your child in everyday routines and different environments to show signs of visual difficulties. Share the videos during the appointment.



The medical provider will check for eye conditions (many with CVI also have eye conditions). To be diagnosed with CVI, symptoms must not solely be explainable by vision problems related to the eye.



If diagnosed, ensure the medical provider refers the patient to state blindness programs and services, and documents medical necessity for vision services and CVI evaluations in early intervention (0-3), school system (3+), college (18+), or adult rehab and vocational programs (18+).

Educational next steps »

Parents/caregivers can ask for CVI assessments while waiting for a medical evaluation.

- **Ages 0-3:** Reach out to early intervention services. Ask for a TVI to complete a functional vision evaluation and CVI assessment. Results will inform the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- **School-ages (3-22):** Contact the school team to request that a TVI completes a functional vision evaluation, CVI assessment, and learning media assessment. Request an O&M specialist to complete an orientation and mobility assessment.
- Assessment results will inform the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) (ages 3-22) to include specially designed instruction, accommodations, and services so learning and the environment are accessible.



Answers you can trust. Community you can count on.

We know this a lot, and we're here to help. Go to CVINow.org to learn about CVI, diagnosis, assessments, interventions, parent support, and much more.



To learn more, visit:
CVINow.org



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