

IRLEN BOSTON DIAGNOSTIC CENTER

48 Sloane Drive, Framingham MA 01701

(781) 396-3321

irlenboston@aol.com



Behaviors Associated with Irlen Syndrome

Directions: Circle the number or place a checkmark beside the item if the answer is yes.

Individuals with Irlen Syndrome (Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome) may:

1. Lose their place on the page easily;
2. Have trouble tracking from line to line or word to word, etc.;
3. Skip words, lines, or reread words or lines;
4. Misreads words or substitutes words;
5. Skips or misses small words such as: “a, an, and, the”;
6. Misses plurals, some word endings and certain compound words;
7. Reads through punctuation marks;
8. Squint, open their eyes wide, rub their eyes, or have red and watery eyes;
9. Be able to see only a small portion of page in focus – the rest may be blurry;
10. Move around or move the book in order to get it in focus;
11. Display a short attention span because of eye strain or sleepiness or fatigue while reading;
12. Experience nausea because of movement seen on the page;
13. Get a headache (or begins to feel the onset of a headache) after reading for awhile;
14. Shade the page or move it to avoid glare;
15. Be fidgety or restless while reading;
16. Prefer to read in a dim light;
17. Make errors when copying from the board;
18. Misalign numbers in math problems; misreads numbers;
19. Have slow and choppy reading;
20. Find it hard to see ahead to musical notes, sharps and flats;
21. Be unable to stay on task without putting extra energy or effort into the process ;
22. Be an underachiever.
23. Difficulty sustaining reading for 15, 20 or 30 minutes without a lot of strain or effort.

If you answered yes to a total of three or more of the questions on either of these two pages, then you might be experiencing the effects of a perceptual problem called Irlen Syndrome/Scotopic Sensitivity. 2010

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Characteristics/Symptoms Associated with Irlen Syndrome

General Characteristics

- Reading is boring
- Poor reader
- Avoids reading
- Rereads for comprehension
- Lack of sustained attention
- Shows strain and fatigue or sleepiness

Specific Reading Difficulties

- Skips words or lines
- Repeats or rereads lines
- Frequently loses place – tracking
- Reading is slow or hesitant
- Reads in a “stop and go” rhythm
- Omits small words
- Reading deteriorates

Complaints While Reading

- Headaches, dizziness or nausea
- Burning or itching eyes
- Sandy, scratchy, dry eyes
- Falls asleep or becomes very sleepy
- Eyes hurt or ache
- Print not clear and sharp
- Background bright and uncomfortable

Observations While Reading

- Rubs eyes
- Moves closer to or farther from page
- Excessive blinking
- Squinting
- Opens Eyes Wide
- Shades the Page
- Must incorporate breaks into reading
- Closes or covers one eye
- Uses finger or other marker
- Moves head
- Reads very close to the page
- Reads word-by-word
- Unable to skim or speed read

Complaints When Using Computers

- Strain and fatigue or sleepy
- Headaches or head hurts
- Print distortions
- Screen breathes or pulsates
- Migraines
- Tired, strained eyes or head

Writing

- Writes uphill or downhill
- Unequal spacing between letters and words
- Makes errors copying from book or chalkboard
- Squints or blinks when copying from chalkboard

Mathematics

- Misaligns digits in number columns
- Difficulty seeing numbers in correct column
- Sloppy, careless errors
- Misreads numbers/switches them

Music

- Plays mostly by ear and
- Has difficulty reading musical notes
- Difficulty tracking note to note

Depth Perception & Sports

- Difficulty getting on and off escalators
- Difficulty with ball sports
- Walks or bumps into table corners or door jambs
- Difficulty judging distances
- Drops or knocks things over
- Poor eye-hand coordination
- Clumsy at times

If you answered yes to a total of three or more of the questions on either of these two pages, you might be experiencing the effects of a perception problem called Irlen Syndrome/Scotopic sensitivity.