

Visual stress

Some people with dyslexic difficulties may experience visual stress when reading. Text can appear distorted and words or letters appear to move or become blurred. White paper or backgrounds can appear too dazzling and make print hard to decipher.

Description of Visual stress (sometimes called Meares-Irlen syndrome)

Visual Stress (Meares-Irlen Syndrome) is a disruptive discomfort in reading that is sometimes found with dyslexics and dyspraxics. It is not related to such factors as shortsightedness, long-sightedness and astigmatism. It appears to be connected with a visual pathway processing dysfunction triggered by black print on a white background, which then results in a problem with ocular coordination. In its most extreme form print appears to be unstable. If this syndrome is present it can be ameliorated through the use of an appropriately coloured overlay.

Full reference can be found in [our Disability Learning Support Specific Learning Difficulties \(SpLDs\) booklet](#)

Useful link:

[Further information: British Dyslexia Association, *Eyes and Dyslexia*](#)