

Cerebral Vision Impairment

What is Cerebral Vision Impairment ?

Cerebral vision impairment (CVI) is a term used to describe vision impairment that occurs in the brain rather than the eyes. This means that messages sent to the brain from the eyes are not properly understood by the brain. Usually the eyes appear to be perfectly normal and function correctly when they are examined.

Sometimes the cerebral blindness is temporary and lasts weeks or months. Sometimes the damage is permanent and messages from the eyes are not decoded.

Children with cerebral vision impairment often have other disabilities such as cerebral palsy.

How does it affect vision?

CVI may result in a decrease of visual acuity or total blindness. It is common for children with CVI to have variation in their visual functioning. This means that one day they may have better vision than the next. Their vision may even change from hour to hour or from task to task.

Who is most at risk?

The part of the brain that interprets messages from the eyes may be damaged by:

- head injury
- a lack of oxygen (hypoxia)
- an infection (e.g. meningitis) or,
- other diseases.

Vision of a child with CVI often improves over time. Children with temporary CVI may begin to have better vision within a couple of days or months after the illness that caused the CVI. However they may not recover all of the vision they had before.

Children with permanent CVI may begin to have better vision over a period of months and years. However they are likely to always have decreased visual acuity. Your child will often find activities easier if there is less visual clutter and they can use their hands to feel things to support what they see with their eyes. They may also find activities easier if they are comfortable and stable. Children with CVI also often respond better to familiar and meaningful objects and situations.

For more information please contact the Children and Youth Services team at VisAbility.



VisAbility

PO Box 101 (61 Kitchener Avenue)
Victoria Park, WA, 6979
Phone: 1800 847 466
Email: info@visability.com.au
www.visability.com.au

