

Vision Fatigue

Signs and symptoms of vision fatigue

- avoidance of visual activity
- blurred vision
- double vision
- headaches
- inability to change focus from near to far objects and vice versa
- increase in nystagmus
- loss of concentration
- sore eyes
- watering eyes

Suggestions for teachers to assist in minimizing student's vision fatigue (some suggested by students themselves):

- allow student to take a vision break within the classroom. This may consist of a 2 minute break, removing glasses, closing eyes, use of digital/oral text, etc) Discuss this with student
- use of larger print, magnifier or audio
- alter position or posture by using a reading stand/slantboard
- mask out some of the print on the page to reduce visual clutter
- avoid glare
- change the lighting conditions, e.g. use a near soft light, move closer to the natural light of the windows, or create more shade on the page
- Add a task light
- intersperse reading/pencil and paper tasks with oral or aural discussion/lecture sessions wherever possible
- if glare is a problem, allow student to move to a darker area in the room or lower the blinds
- provide worksheets in a 'sans serif' font such as ARIAL, TAHOMA or COMIC SANS in a size no smaller than the recommended sustainable print size
- allow extra time or reduce quantity of vision task

The student is likely to experience vision fatigue 5-10 minutes after starting a vision-related activity. The differences in onset can vary with:

- the time of day
- intensity and type of visual activity
- previous exposure to the task, e.g., knowledge of vocabulary and subject matter; whether the task is a test
- lighting and glare

A number of eye conditions can be particularly associated with vision fatigue, for example:

- aniridia
- coloboma
- congenital nystagmus
- deteriorating central vision
- ocular albinism