

# **Dyslexia**

## **What is Dyslexia?**

Dyslexia is a brain-based type of learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read. These individuals typically read at levels significantly lower than expected despite having normal intelligence. Although the disorder varies from person to person, common characteristics among people with dyslexia are difficulty with phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds), spelling, and/or rapid visual-verbal responding. In individuals with adult onset of dyslexia, it usually occurs as a result of brain injury or in the context of dementia; this contrasts with individuals with dyslexia who simply were never identified as children or adolescents. Dyslexia can be inherited in some families, and recent studies have identified a number of genes that may predispose an individual to developing dyslexia.

## **Is there any treatment?**

The main focus of treatment should be on the specific learning problems of affected individuals. The usual course is to modify teaching methods and the educational environment to meet the specific needs of the individual with dyslexia.

## **What is the prognosis?**

For those with dyslexia, the prognosis is mixed. The disability affects such a wide range of people and produces such different symptoms and varying degrees of severity that predictions are hard to make. The prognosis is generally good, however, for individuals whose dyslexia is identified early, who have supportive family and friends and a strong self-image, and who are involved in a proper remediation program.

## **What research is being done?**

The NINDS and other institutes of the National Institutes of Health, including the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute

of Mental Health, conduct research on dyslexia. Current research avenues focus on developing techniques to diagnose and treat dyslexia and other learning disabilities, increasing the understanding of the biological basis of learning disabilities, and exploring the relationship between neurophysiological processes and cognitive functions with regard to reading ability.

For a current list of clinical trials and a list of studies currently seeking patients, click [here](#).

### **For more information...**

#### **International Dyslexia Association**

40 York Road, 4th Floor

Baltimore, MD 21204

<https://dyslexiaida.org>

410-296-0232 800-ABCD123

#### **Learning Disabilities Association of America**

4156 Library Road, Suite 1

Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349

<https://ldaamerica.org>

412-341-1515

#### **National Center for Learning Disabilities**

381 Park Avenue South

Suite 1401

New York, NY 10016

<https://www.ncld.org>

212-545-7510 888-575-7373

#### **National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)**

National Institutes of Health, DHHS

31 Center Drive, Rm. 2A32 MSC 2425

Bethesda, MD 20892-2425

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/Pages/index.aspx>

301-496-5133

#### **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

National Institutes of Health, DHHS

6001 Executive Blvd. Rm. 8184, MSC 9663

Bethesda, MD 20892-9663

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>

301-443-4513 / 866-615-NIMH (-6464) / 301-443-8431 (TTY)

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