



FACT SHEET

Brain Injury & Vision

*Do
you
have
trouble
with
vision
since
your
brain
injury?*

What does this mean?

We often think about vision as being simply what we see. However, vision also includes how our brains make sense of what we see. Vision also helps other systems in the body work well; these include the systems for thinking and moving. When the visual system is not working properly, it can have a wide-ranging impact on daily living activities (e.g., reading, driving, employment, school, and recreational activities) and quality of life.

How might a brain injury affect vision?

Depending on its location and severity, a traumatic brain injury can affect your vision by damaging parts of the brain involved in visual processing and/or perception (e.g., cranial nerves, optic nerve tract or other circuitry involved in vision, occipital lobe).

Common examples of vision difficulties:

There are a variety of visual problems that can occur at different time points in your recovery. Some of the most common types of vision problems include:

- ◆ Blurred vision, especially with seeing up close.
- ◆ Double vision.
- ◆ Decreased peripheral vision.
- ◆ Complete loss of vision in one or both eyes (depending on the injury).

Recommended strategies:

- ◆ Take breaks often when doing tasks that rely on vision.
- ◆ Magnify objects.
- ◆ Increase contrast. An object that stands out from the background will be easier to see.
- ◆ Reduce glare.
- ◆ Avoid visual overload. Cut down on clutter at home and at work. Try to keep all items needed to complete a task together in one place. Designate one storage place for a frequently used item. This will help to not become overwhelmed by visual information.
- ◆ For those with complete vision loss, devices such as talking timers, alarm clocks, microwaves, thermometers, tactile dots, screen-reading software for computers, talking books, various mobile phone apps, and mobility canes may be helpful. Learning Braille may also be helpful.
- ◆ Evaluation by a neuro-optometrist or vision rehabilitation therapist may also be needed. The Bosma Center in Indianapolis is also a good resource for severe visual impairment.