

Visual Stress and Dyslexia

Visual stress affects around 15 -20% of the population. Among people with dyslexic difficulties the incidence of visual stress is estimated to be around 35 -40%. This can cause great difficulty in both acquiring literacy skills and reading and comprehension, and can make reading very tiring.

Visual stress can give rise to visual disturbance or discomfort, such as:

- blurred letters or words which go out of focus
- letters which appear to move, appear to be back-to-front, shimmering or shaking
- headaches from reading
- words or letters which break into two and appear as double
- difficulty with tracking across the page
- discomfort from glare on the page or oversensitivity to bright lights
- finding it easier to read large, widely spaced print, than small and crowded print.

Effective Treatments

Many dyslexic people are sensitive to the glare of white backgrounds on a page, screen or whiteboard. The use of cream or pastel coloured backgrounds can mitigate this difficulty as can coloured filters either as an overlay or as tinted reading glasses. The effectiveness of coloured filters has been clearly demonstrated over a number of years. Research in the UK and in Australia shows that people who need coloured filters, who are said to have visual stress, need to have exactly the right colour. Many optometrists use an instrument, the Intuitive Colorimeter, to determine the exact colour that is necessary for coloured glasses.

People with reading difficulties sometimes have a weakness in eye co-ordination or focusing and an eye-care practitioner might recommend treating this with eye exercises or glasses. If these problems are present, they should be detected and treated before coloured filters are prescribed.

Dyslexia Research Trust is a leading research organisation into the visual aspects of dyslexia. It runs clinics for the treatment of visual stress in Oxford and Reading.

Tel: 0118 958 5950 or www.dyslexic.org.uk

Coloured overlays/Reading Rulers are available from www.crossboweducation.com

A list of optometric practices in Oxfordshire which offer assessment of the effect of colour in reducing the symptoms of visual stress is attached:

OPTOMETRIC PRACTICES IN OXFORDSHIRE offering assessment of the effect of colour in reducing the symptoms of Visual Stress

Mr Kumail Merali, Abingdon Eye Centre

4 Bury Street, Abingdon OX14 3QY

Abingdoneyecentre@hotmail.com

01235 533328

www.abingdoneyecentre.com

- The Institute of Optometry Coloured overlay assessments
 - Pattern glare test, designed by Bruce Evans
 - Intuitive Colorimetry for precision tinted spectacles
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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Leanne Turret, Carterton Opticians

The Giles Centre, Carterton, OX18 3DH

leanneturret@cartertonopticians.co.uk

01993 841268

www.cartertonopticians.co.uk

- Institute of Optometry Coloured Overlay assessments
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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Alasdair Doxey, Campbells Opticians

3a Newbury Street, Wantage OX12 8BU

info@campbellsopticians.com

01235 763312

www.campbellsopticians.co.uk

- Institute of Optometry Coloured Overlay assessments
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David Spicer Optometrists

1 Elms Parade, Botley, Oxford OX2 9LG

reception@davidspiceroptometrists.co.uk

01865 241142

www.davidspiceroptometrists.co.uk

- Institute of Optometry Coloured Overlay assessments
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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Morgan White Optometrists

106a Oxford Road, Kidlington OX5 1BL

reception@morgan-white.co.uk

01865 372125

www.morgan-white.co.uk

- The Institute of Optometry Coloured overlay assessments
 - Pattern glare test, designed by Bruce Evans
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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Patricia Hayselden & Partners Opticians

60 St Mary's Street, Wallingford OX10 0EL

eyecare@patriciahayseldenandpartners.co.uk

01491 835466

www.patriciahayseldenandpartners.co.uk

- Institute of Optometry Coloured Overlay assessments
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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Pitman Optometrists

51 Market Square, Witney OX28 6AG

33 High Street, Kidlington OX5 2DH

pitmanoptoms@onetel.com

01993 771793

01865 842044

www.pitman4eyes.co.uk

- The Institute of Optometry Coloured overlay assessments
 - Pattern glare test, designed by Bruce Evans
 - we have a family history of dyslexia and can offer a sympathetic and empathetic service
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Robert Stanley Opticians

23 Stert St, Abingdon OX14 3JF

137 London Road, Headington OX3 9HZ

22 Cornmarket, Thame OX9 2BL

8 St Martins St, Wallingford OX10 0AL

Wantage Health Centre, Grove OX12 9BN

johnedwards@robertstanley.co.uk

01235 520849

01865 766488

01844 261096

01491 837033

01235 769596

www.robertstanley.co.uk

- The Institute of Optometry Coloured overlay assessments
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
 - we offer a range of overlays, monitor screen covers and reading rulers, manufacture our own tints to match overlay colours, and offer this service to other opticians
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Sarah Marshall, Specsavers

Unit 17, Crown Walk Shopping Centre

Bicester OX26 6HY

sj_marshall@btinternet.com

01869 321422

www.specsavers.com

- The Institute of Optometry Coloured overlay assessments
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
 - we offer a range of overlays, monitor screen covers and reading rulers, manufacture our own tints to match overlay colours, and offer this service to other opticians
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Karen Davies, Woodstock Opticians

46-48 High Street, Woodstock OX20 1TG

karen.a.davies@btopenworld.com

01993 811870

www.woodstock-oxfordshire.co.uk/optician

- Cerium Coloured Overlay assessments
 - Intuitive Colorimetry for precision tinted spectacles
 - Wilkins Rate of Reading Test
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