

CVI and Epilepsy

**CVI is common in
individuals with epilepsy.**

64-78% of individuals with CVI
also have epilepsy.

1 in 30 kids may have CVI-related
visual difficulties.

1 in 26 individuals have epilepsy.

Cerebral/cortical visual impairment (CVI) is a brain-based visual impairment. With CVI, there's damage to the visual pathways or visual processing areas of the brain.

Epilepsy is when groups of nerve cells (neurons) in the brain cause seizures when they send the wrong electrical and chemical signals.

Both CVI and epilepsy are brain conditions and often caused by birth complications and genetic conditions.

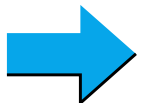


Diagnosing CVI and Epilepsy

CVI is common but alarmingly under-diagnosed. Less than 20% of kids with CVI have a diagnosis. CVI is often missed because it can appear like other conditions. Diagnosing CVI is complex and the medical community is working on developing diagnostic criteria. Find a doctor who can evaluate CVI at Perkins.org/CVIDoctorDirectory.

Epilepsy is much more well-known and has many diagnostic steps. Learn more at Epilepsy.com/Diagnosis.

When to suspect CVI



When to suspect CVI

If your child experiences unexplained behaviors or visual difficulties, it's important to consider cerebral/cortical visual impairment (CVI). Since CVI is a neurological condition, it often co-occurs with epilepsy and other neurological, neurodevelopmental, and genetic conditions.

What to notice? Individuals with CVI might:



Look at things differently: bring objects close to eyes, tilt head to see something, notice an item brightly colored or only when it moves or lights up, have trouble noticing items at a distance, or shows inconsistent use of vision.



Have trouble finding or recognizing things: not notice new items, lose things that drop on the ground, have trouble finding something in a new or cluttered spot, miss things in certain visual fields, or need verbal cues to find something.



Have trouble interacting with people: mistake a stranger for a family member, only recognize someone by their voice, trouble finding familiar people in photos, not return a smile, trouble making eye contact, or miss gestures.



Get visually tired easily: put head down, get fatigued or irritable after using vision for a certain amount of time, difficulty using vision pre- and post-seizure, get overwhelmed, upset, anxious, or have a meltdown in new, loud, or busy places.



Have trouble at meals: hard time finding food on a plate or eating in a busy environment, not reach for food or a cup, not look at food while eating, or not open their mouth until their food or drink touches their lips.



Need help navigating spaces: trip over clearly visible things, bump into furniture, walk in front of moving objects, not know familiar routes, have trouble moving through crowds, and use caution down steps: drag heels, pause, or tap toes.



Struggle with school tasks: appear to have a short attention span or is not interested in learning, struggle with reading, math, or writing, reluctant to join a group or participate if it's noisy or loud, or need help finding items in the classroom.

This isn't a full list. Go to **CVINow.org** to learn more.