



# Coloboma

## Description

Coloboma is a congenital condition that occurs when certain structures or parts of the eye do not fully form during gestation (as the baby develops in the uterus).

Colobomas may appear as notches, gaps or clefts in one of many parts of the eye. Affected areas may include the iris, retina, lens, choroid, eyelid as well as other ocular tissues and the optic nerve.

Coloboma may affect one or both eyes.

## Implications

Depending on the extent and location of the coloboma, there will be decreased visual acuity and loss of vision related to those areas. Therefore, the impact that it has on vision depends on the location and size of the coloboma.

Colobomas affecting the iris generally do not lead to vision loss. However, photophobia (sensitivity to light) is likely.

Colobomas of the retina create vision loss in specific parts of the visual field. Low vision may occur in large colobomas of the retina, particularly if the macula or optic nerve are affected. This is because the vision loss cannot be completely corrected (with glasses or contact lenses).

A vision condition commonly associated with coloboma is microphthalmia (small eye). Other associated conditions may include nystagmus (involuntary eye movement), myopia (short sightedness), glaucoma (increased ocular pressure), or retinal detachment.

## Accessing the curriculum

Seat the student at the front of the class to ensure they have the best possible view of the teaching focus. Also consider seating location to reduce glare.

Reduce classroom environmental glare. Avoid whiteboards, reflective white paper (buff may provide better access), and instruction next to windows.

Consider enlarging print or the provision of dark lined paper.

Use contrasting colour on surfaces.

Magnification aids may be useful.

Consider the impact of visual fatigue and offer eye rest time.

Modify physical activities and provide detailed verbal instructions of all actions, skills and game rules (where necessary).

Click to see an [Interactive Eye Diagram](#) (web link)

**As this document contains generic information, please consult with the Vision Education Program in regard to individual educational needs.**

## References

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