

Assessing Contrast Sensitivity

Materials:

- Lea Numbers Contrast Sensitivity Test
- Recording Form
- Ruler

Set-up:

- The client should be seated and wearing eyeglasses with reading prescription (if any)
- Provide a well-lit room and ensure there is no glare reflecting on the chart
- Place the chart 40 centimeters (16 inches) in front of the client's face and centered at their midline

Instructions to the client:

- The purpose of this test is to assess your contrast sensitivity, or how well you can see objects that are faint
- This is important because many objects in the environment have poor contrast, that is, they do not stand out well from their surroundings and can be difficult to see such as water on the floor, a curb, or steps. Some eye diseases will cause you to lose this kind of vision
- This test measures your ability to see contrast by showing you groups of numbers on a chart that become fainter as you read down the chart.
- During the test you can turn your head to one side if that helps you to see the number, but you cannot lean forward or backward. The test uses the numbers 5, 6, 8, and 9

Test Procedure:

- The test should be completed binocularly
- It is acceptable to prompt the client if a line can't be seen
- Use accurate testing and recording procedures (see instructions included with the test)

Interpretation of the Testing Results:

- Client sees all numbers on all pages:
 - Good contrast sensitivity function for communication and mobility
- Client reads charts on first three pages:
 - May have difficulty seeing facial expressions, detecting low contrast drop-offs
- Client reads charts on first two pages:
 - May have difficulty with subtle changes in support surfaces, poor quality print, and recognizing faces
- Client reads chart on first page only:
 - May need enhancement of contrast to function safely and assistance to ambulate safely. Driving performance should be carefully evaluated
- Client does not see any numbers on any pages:
 - Contrast sensitivity function is extremely limited, and safety to drive is highly questionable