

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS TO UCL MEDICAL SCHOOL AND MEDICAL STUDENTS WITH COLOUR DEFICIENT VISION

INTRODUCTION:

'Inherited colour vision defects are carried by mothers through to their sons. Inherited red-green colour defects are the most common form of colour deficiency and minor or moderate problems are found in about 8% of the male population (1 in every 12 individuals). Women are rarely affected (around 1 in 200 of the female population).

There are three classes of colour deficiency, red (protanopia), green (deutanopia) and blue (tritanopia). Red and green defects are known collectively as red-green colour deficiency and are the most common type of inherited colour deficiency. Tritan defects involve colour confusions between blue and yellow, violet and red, and blue and green. These are rare in inherited form in comparison with red and green defects but are common as an acquired form of colour vision defect. For more information on the mechanisms of colour vision perception and acquired defects see' ([Health & Safety Executive 2005](#))

IMPACT ON ROLE:

In most cases CDV is unlikely to have a significant impact as the deficiency is usually mild. It is therefore important that if you do have severely CDV that you discuss this with a Medical Student Support Tutor as soon as possible, in case adjustments are required to support you in overcoming your problem at an early stage.

Areas of medicine where CDV doctors have reported issues in the past include:

- Interpreting histological slides and stains
- Distinguishing dermatological lesions and rashes
- Detecting skin colour changes e.g. cyanosis, pallor and flushing
- Reading projected slides in lectures
- Reading urine dipsticks
- Detecting inflamed tympanic membranes in otitis media
- Identifying cannulas and blood bottles by colour
- Following laser pointers in lectures.

ADVICE ON MANAGEMENT:

- UCL Occupational Health Service (UCL OHS) will ask the student for their consent to notify the UCL Medical School that the applicant has CDV.
- On commencement, students should make an appointment with a Student Support Tutor to make them aware of condition so if any difficulties arise they can discuss these and ways to manage them.

- If the student declares that they are severely CDV then UCL OHS will advise UCL Medical School, with the applicant's consent, that they should consider undertaking an assessment in the clinical skills laboratory to assess if it is possible to support the applicant with appropriate adjustments.