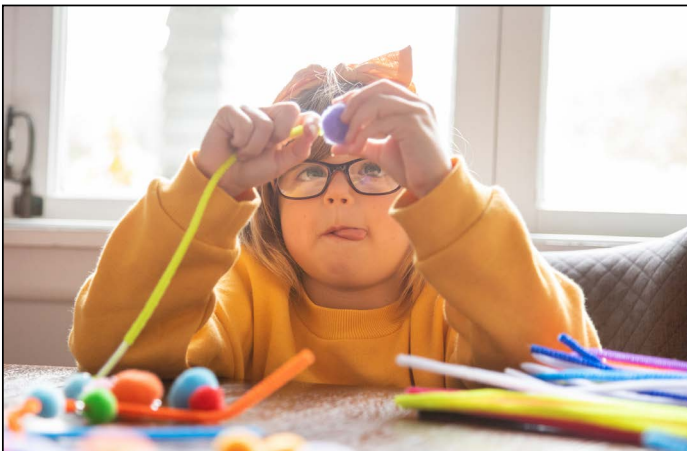


Sensory Integration Dysfunction

What is sensory integration dysfunction?

Sensory integration dysfunction [dys-FUNK-shun] is when your child can't manage the information coming in through their senses (also called stimuli [STIM-yoo-lie]). This includes things they might hear, see, touch, or taste. It is also called a **sensory processing disorder**. This disorder may impact your child's ability to:

- Understand the stimuli (sensory discrimination) and how to react to it
- Respond to the stimuli appropriately (sensory modulation)
- Perform basic tasks (motor planning)



They may also struggle with more than one of these conditions. Children with sensory integration dysfunction may have trouble learning, playing, meeting, or talking with others, and doing daily activities.

How do I know if my child has sensory integration dysfunction?

An occupational therapist can meet your child to see if they have sensory integration dysfunction. This meeting may include a parent interview, sensory checklists, and standardized testing.

What are the signs of sensory integration dysfunction?

If your child has sensory integration dysfunction, they may:

- Be unusually sensitive to clothing or getting dressed
- Be unusually uncomfortable with diaper changes and washing hair, bathing, or brushing teeth
- Dislike and avoid touching sand, dirt, finger paints, or glue
- Be unusually sensitive to tastes or smells
- Avoid climbing, swinging, sliding, and taking escalators, elevators, or stairs
- Be unusually sensitive to loud sounds or surroundings
- Have trouble with hand coordination or handwriting
- Have trouble with body movement or coordination
- Have trouble imitating others or playing a variety of games
- Have trouble participating in team sports
- Not notice pain and temperature
- Be unusually sensitive to pain or temperature changes
- Be an unusually picky eater
- Be an unusually sloppy eater
- Chew or eat non-food objects
- Have an unusual need for movement (fidgeting, rocking, or spinning)
- Seem clumsy or accident-prone
- Have difficulty expressing how or what they are feeling. For example: emotions or internal sensations such as hunger or needing to use the restroom.

How is sensory integration dysfunction treated?

You and your child's occupational therapist will create a sensory treatment plan. Together you will try to meet your child's goals with therapy, parent education, and home activities. The occupational therapist will help your child in a special sensory-rich play environment, with activities your child enjoys.

What if I have questions?

If you think your child has symptoms of sensory integration dysfunction, talk to your child's primary healthcare provider.

Notes