

Myths & Questions

"I will never learn this"

Most dyscalculics can learn enough to do okay and beyond. It depends on tools and learning methods.

"If you work long and hard enough, you learn it"

No. Some students need different learning methods, in every aspect of the assignment.

"The problems come from the students lack of concentration and motivation"

No. It is always the teacher's job to motivate the learning disabled student, and to make sure that the student learns in class. You can't expect a learning disabled student to feel motivated after years of failure.

"I have had extra math classes forever, but I still don't get this - is there something wrong with me?"

No. When a student needs special learning methods instead of grinding, extra math classes can do more harm than good.

"My teacher calls me stupid and other stuff like that - is he right?"

No. Dyscalculia has nothing to do with being smart; many smart, accomplished people have it, just like dyslexia.

"I'm a teacher, and I want to help my dyscalculic student. But how?"

Your student has probably never met anyone who wanted to help, so you can make a big difference in his or her life. 1: Get him/her diagnosed. 2: Be patient. 3: Understand that your student really wants to be able to understand the subject. 4: Find professional help and read all you can find about dyscalculia.

Getting Help

If you have dyscalculia, you have the right to be taken seriously and to get the help you need.

If you are in school, contact them and ask to see their counselor - they will know, where you can go to with your problem. If not, know that it is their job to find the help you need.

If you are not in school, but want to be diagnosed/helped, contact your local learning disabilities association.

If you have any questions or don't know where to go, you can try and ask us - either in our discussion forum online, or by emailing us.

Good online resources:

Dyscalculia.org
Ldonline.com
Dyscalculiainfo.org
Schwablearning.org

Dyscalculiaforum.com is an international discussion forum for dyscalculics, teachers, parents and other people interested in the math disability. The forum is completely nonprofit, not part of any organization and maintained by dyscalculics.

The Math Disability



dyscalculiaforum.com
mail@dyscalculiaforum.com

Symptoms

Here's a list of common dyscalculia symptoms. Having some of the symptoms does not mean that you have dyscalculia – just as having some of the symptoms but not others means that you don't. A professional needs to test you, before you can be sure.

- Normal or above normal verbal skills: reading, writing, spelling. Good in areas of science, until math is required. May be good at geometry.
- Problems with time and direction. Having a hard time remembering schedules and keeping track of time. Gets lost easily and seems absent minded.
- Bad at addition, subtraction, division and multiplication - may be able to do an assignment one day, and forget how to do it the next.
- Cannot do taxes, budgeting or balance checkbooks - may be afraid of money.
- Unable to remember math rules, concepts, order of operations and basic math facts.
- May have problems with motor skills - can't remember sequences in aerobics/dance steps, fingering when playing an instrument etc.
- Can't remember rules and understand strategy in games and sports.

Read a more comprehensive symptoms-list online.

Facts

Dyscalculia means "specific learning disability in mathematics".

Having dyscalculia does not mean that you can't do math at all (if that's the case, it's called acalculia), just that it is harder and that you need help.

4-6% of the World's population have this learning disability. Most people don't even know that dyscalculia exists.

Just as many females as males have dyscalculia - all studies have shown 50/50.

There are many forms and degrees of dyscalculia. Some are maybe able to multiply but not divide and the other way around. Some are maybe able to do math at a high level but not something as simple as $765-340=$.

Dyscalculia is something people have all life, but the degree of it CAN change.



Dyscalculia

A large amount of children and adults are fighting with big problems (often alone), when it comes to math and numbers. They have dyscalculia, the "math dyslexia". Dyscalculia is seen in all ages and social groups.

Dyscalculia is acknowledged in the medical world - it is in the DSM-IV and WHO ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases), in the same category as dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

UN's Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities read:

"States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system."

Scientists have found two kinds of dyscalculia: Primary dyscalculia and spatial dyscalculia.

Primary dyscalculia is the typical kind. It's caused by a dysfunction in an area called angular gyrus, right behind the ear in the left hemisphere.

Spatial dyscalculia (Nonverbal Learning Disorder) is based on a dysfunction in the parietal areas, mostly in the right hemisphere.

This does not mean brain damage, but that the function of certain areas isn't optimal.

Read more about the two types on dyscalculiaforum.com.

Published in October 2005- copy all you want!