What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a neurobiological condition that tends to run in families and affects the way a person perceives and processes the sounds in words. It is not due to impairments of vision, hearing or thinking.

Current scientific knowledge about dyslexia is based on 30+ years of research by the National Institutes of Health. Statistics show that up to 20 percent of people have dyslexia, and those with mild to moderate symptoms are not consistently identified. In addition, 80 percent of students enrolled in special education for learning disabilities have severe dyslexia but may not be receiving instruction shown to be effective for dyslexic students.

Dyslexic students can often appear to be at grade level with reading because they can rely on clues found in the pictures and in the story to help them "read" words in the text. Often by third grade they are no longer able to compensate, because these strategies do not work with the multi-syllable words being taught at that age.
POSSIBLE SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

Deficient phonological processing that may result in...
- mixing up sounds in long words beyond age 5 or 6 ("aminal," "pisgetti")
- mispronouncing certain sounds (r-l, m-n, s-sh, ch)
- inability to create words that rhyme by age 4
- difficulty learning names and sounds of alphabet letters during kindergarten
- trouble finding the right word when speaking
- difficulty with spelling
- difficulty sounding out unknown words (decoding)
- failure to recognize high frequency sight words
- slow, labored, inaccurate oral reading
- guessing at words based on shape, context, or picture clues
- skipping or misreading small words (at, of, to) and ignoring word endings (-ed, -ing)
- difficulty learning a foreign language

Difficulty memorizing and recalling random, illogical facts and sequences such as:
- saying and writing alphabet letters
- spelling their full name
- phone number and address
- days of the week, months of the year
- math facts such as multiplication tables
- multi-step math procedures
- motor sequences for tying shoes
- motor sequences for forming letters in printing and in cursive

May also have slow, nonautomatic handwriting (called "dysgraphia") that is hard to read

Directional confusion, as seen in...
- failure to establish a dominant hand by age 4
- trouble identifying left and right
- letter and number reversals that persist beyond the end of 1st grade
- computing math problems in the wrong direction
- difficulty telling time on a clock with hands

EVALUATING DYSLEXIA

Dr. Marion Huettner evaluates children, teenagers, and young adults for dyslexia. The following are recommended prior to evaluation:
- Visit www.brightsolutions.us and view "Dyslexia: Symptoms and Solutions" (video)
- Deliver/mail copies of report cards, standardized achievement test scores, prior evaluations, homework samples, and any other educational/school information to Dr. Huettner for review

The Evaluation Includes:
- Initial intake (90-minutes)—to determine if the student has other mental health conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, adjustment disorder, or anxiety disorder, and whether evaluation for dyslexia is warranted. This is at least partially covered by most mental health insurances.
- Additional evaluation—several sessions (3 to 6 hours in total).
- Feedback session—to discuss results of the evaluation and to provide recommendations.

Insurance/Payment Arrangements:
The Medical Associates Business Office is available to work with families to help determine insurance coverage and arrange a payment plan if needed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT:
Call 563-584-3441
Toll-Free 800-648-6868, ext 3441
Medical Associates East Campus
1000 Langworthy Street, Dubuque

Emotional difficulties such as stress-related headaches, stomach aches, dread of going to school, and shutting down when doing homework, can signal a problem.