



Quick Facts About Anisocoria

What Is Anisocoria?



Courtesy of Valerie Biousse, M.D.

- **Anisocoria** is a medical term for unequal pupil size. Normally our pupils are relatively the same size. While small differences in pupil size are normal and can even come and go (**physiologic anisocoria**), constant and significant differences in pupil sizes may be a sign of damage to the nerves or brain.

What Should I Do About Anisocoria?

- A **neuro-ophthalmologist** checks your pupils, eyelids, and eye movements.
- If there is any concerning features a scan such as MRI can be obtained to investigate further.

How Can Anisocoria Affect Me?

- **Anisocoria cannot make you go blind.** Some people notice some blurry vision and/or light sensitivity.
- **Anisocoria should not be ignored. It can be a sign of a serious neurological problem.**
- There are two potentially serious conditions that can cause anisocoria: **Horner syndrome** and **3rd cranial nerve palsy**.
- **Horner syndrome occurs** when one of the nerves does not work. **The pupil on the affected side is abnormally small and the upper eyelid may droop.** Because this nerve passes near many important structures, Horner syndrome can be a sign of a serious condition like a a damaged blood vessel, a stroke or tumor.
- **3rd cranial nerve palsy** is dysfunction of another nerve. **The affected pupil is abnormally large and is associated with a droopy eyelid and double vision.** 3rd cranial nerve palsy is important because it can be due to a serious medical condition like a stroke or aneurysm.



<https://www.nanosweb.org/anisocoria>