

Assessing PERRLA

A neurological assessment or neuro check should be done when a resident hits his or her head or if it is unknown if they hit their head (unwitnessed fall). A key component is the assessment of the resident's pupils. A change from baseline could identify the resident has a potential head injury and should be referred for additional testing.

PERRLA is an acronym for **P**upils **E**qual **R**ound **R**eactive to **L**ight and **A**ccommodation.

What You Need

- A penlight
- Piece of paper

How To Perform

- **Equal:** Check that pupils are equal in size.
- **Round:** Check that each pupil is round.
- **Reactive to Light:** Dim light or use paper above eyes to decrease room light.
 - Shine the penlight over one of the resident's eyes and observe the pupils.
 - Hold the light for three seconds.
 - Turn off the penlight. Observe the pupil for dilatation.
 - Repeat on the other eye.
- **Accommodation:** Utilize your penlight off and in the vertical position.
 - Slowly bring the penlight closer and closer to the resident's nose and observe and note how the pupils react as the penlight gets closer.

Determining Results

- Healthy pupils should be in the center of the iris and are about the same size (approximately 3-5mm) that look like circles with even borders. Pupils should open and close in response to light and should respond equally. If an abnormal assessment finding is identified, please notify the provider and document per facility policy.