

Investigation 3.12 Head Injury

Dr. _____

3.12 - Activity 1: Checking Pupil Reactivity

P ____ Date _____

Required Supplies: Penlight or Flashlight (not a laser)

Directions: Follow the steps in order:

1. Lower the light level in the room if possible
2. Get a partner to test
3. Observe the pupil size of your test subject; both pupils should be approximately equal in size
4. Quickly shine the penlight or flashlight briefly (1 or 2 seconds) into their eye and observe the pupil constrict (get smaller)
5. Then shine the light away from the eye and watch the pupil get larger.
6. Repeat steps four (4) and five (5) on the other eye

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Post-Script

Alice made it to the hospital emergency room and the neurosurgeon was waiting and ready to take over. He performed neurological tests and determined that Alice was, indeed, in danger of permanent brain damage if he did not relieve the pressure on her brain. He ordered that she be delivered immediately to the special procedures room so that he can perform emergency brain surgery.

Thanks to your medical curiosity about Alice's condition and your medical knowledge to know first, to look at her eyes, and second, to know the significance of her eyes appearing fixed and dilated, Alice came through her surgery well and suffered no permanent disabilities.

Do you think you might want to be a brain surgeon? Later in this chapter you will come across some activities you can use to find out.