



Supporting Students with Misophonia

Misophonia is a condition in which individuals experience a severe reaction to certain sounds. Certain noises such as chewing, lip smacking or breathing may cause anger and physical arousal. The reaction can provoke a flight/fight reaction and can cause intense discomfort. Experiencing triggers can lead to profound functional impairment.

The following videos give an insight into misophonia:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQkyj3ju1aI> (2.18 min): Shows how it feels to hold a conversation with triggers and the impact it can have.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVBWOTb6Tpw> (5.09 min): News report discussing 'misophonia'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoD1-2AFje8> (4.03 min): Research from Newcastle University.

How might Misophonia affect someone at university?

- Misophonia can affect concentration and memory which may affect the ability to focus on studies.
- Students may experience significant symptoms of fatigue due to the high state of arousal and fight/flight response.
- Triggers can provoke different responses depending on the individual and how well they are able to cope on that day. The student may physically react, for example by rocking, covering ears, hunching down in their seat, leaving the room abruptly.
- Students may experience high levels of anxiety.

Suggested teaching and learning adjustments

- Be prepared to meet with the student before teaching begins to get to know their individual needs and what their triggers are.
- Students may require breaks in teaching sessions.
- Be aware that Students may employ strategies such wearing headphones to play familiar/comforting music to help manage symptoms.
- Provide presentation slides (PowerPoint, Google slides, Keynote etc.), handouts and other teaching resources in advance of class sessions (i.e., upload to the KLE and send email reminders). This will allow students plenty of time to access, print and read materials. Students can also identify in advance any key triggers, for example if audio visual material is used.
- Support students to revisit and revise lecture content by using lecture capture technology or allowing audio recording of lectures. If students have a reasonable adjustment in place to allow audio recording of lectures, this should be permitted.
- Student may need additional note taking support if background noise on audio recordings is a trigger.
- Students may require specific adjustments for exams and other assessments, including the provision of alternative forms of assessment where necessary. Discuss requirements with your Disability Liaison Officer (DLO), examinations officer and as required, contact Disability and Dyslexia Support (DDS) for advice.
- The student may require assignment deadline extensions or exam deferral if they experience a significant trigger(s).

Further reading

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-44084-8#:~:text=Misophonia%20is%20a%20condition%20in,and%20physical%20arousal%20C3>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5808324/>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-44084-8>

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/press/articles/archive/2021/05/misophonia-asupersensitivebrainconnection/>