



**The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Convergence Insufficiency Exercises

Information for patients
and parents



Leeds Centre for
Ophthalmology

Convergence Insufficiency

You have been diagnosed with convergence insufficiency. This means that your eyes find it difficult to converge and focus on near objects which causes the symptoms that you have been experiencing. This condition can be easily treated with a few simple exercises. We usually recommend that these are done several times a day e.g. five or six times per day for 2-3 minutes at a time.

Research shows that improvement in symptoms is directly related to the effort that is put in to doing the exercises - the harder you try, the quicker you will improve. Patients with convergence insufficiency who carry out their exercises as instructed, should recover within four weeks, sometimes sooner.

This leaflet is to help remind you of what you have been told in clinic.

Exercises

1. Smooth convergence

This is to strengthen the ability to pull your eyes in when you look at a close object.

Hold the target at arm's length in a slightly depressed position. Gradually, bring the target to your nose, keeping it single and clear at all times. Stop moving the target when the image becomes double.

Try hard to join the images by pulling your eyes in. Focussing to get the image clear might help you get it single. Once you join the images, keep moving the target closer to your nose. When it becomes impossible to join the images together, move the target away slightly until it is single again; then, move the target closer to your nose.

Repeat for a minute or so or as instructed.

2. Jump convergence

Choose an object that is at least three metres from you (such as a photograph or picture).

Hold the target at arm's length and focus on it - keeping it single and clear.

Alternate your gaze, from the distant target to the near target. Each time you look at the distant target, bring the near target slightly closer to your nose. The aim is to jump from the distance to the near target aiming to get close to the tip of your nose with ease and clarity. If the near target becomes double, try hard to join the images together, then continue to move the near target closer. Move the target further away when it becomes impossible to join the two images, even with your best effort.

To help your control, try keeping the near target single for a count to 10.

Repeat for a minute or so or as instructed.

3. Dot card

Hold the dot card sloping slightly downwards from the end of your nose.

Look at the dot furthest away. The dot you look at must be single. All the others will be double and you will see crossed lines through the dot you are looking at. Work down the dots towards your nose keeping the dot you are looking at single with crossed lines through it.

To vary the exercises and to help your control, try keeping each dot single for a count to 10.

You can also “jump” about from one dot to another in no particular order. Always remember to keep the dot you focus on single. The aim is to keep the nearest dot to your nose single comfortably.

You can also use the letters on the reverse of the card aiming to keep each letter single and clear.

4. Stereograms

Hold the card at arm's length. In the other hand, hold a pencil a few inches in front of the card.

Concentrate on the tip of the pencil and you will see that the card has gone double. Adjust the position of the pencil, by moving it forwards or backwards so that the images on the card overlap in the middle and you achieve three images. These may be blurred.

Hold the images steady until the middle one becomes clear. Once you can do this fairly easily, try to keep your eyes in the correct position to get the three images whilst removing the pencil. Try to hold this for a count of 10.

IMPORTANT

After each exercise session it is important to relax your eyes completely. Either close your eyes for a minute or look out of the window at the horizon.

You may initially experience a slight increase in symptoms to begin with. This is perfectly normal and should not deter you from continuing your exercises.

Questions

If you have any questions about convergence insufficiency or these exercises, please speak to the orthoptist at your next appointment. Alternatively, you can contact us.

Contact us

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