

# Information for patients and carers

## Home exercises: Dot card

Treatment of convergence insufficiency

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy horizontal bands in shades of blue, ranging from a light sky blue to a dark navy blue.

## What is the aim of this exercise?

The aim of this home exercise is to be able to see the single dot that is closest to your nose and to be able to maintain this position for a count of 10.

## How do I perform this exercise?

Please note that these are only basic instructions for this exercise and adjustments may be made by the orthoptist based on your individual need. The orthoptist will demonstrate how to perform this exercise and advise you on how often and how long the exercise should be performed during your appointment. The orthoptist will also discuss the importance of relaxing your eyes after exercising (please see the 'Home exercises: Relaxation' leaflet for more information).

## Instructions

**It is probably best to get somebody to read these instructions to you as you do the exercise:**

1. Bend the card in half along where the dots are.
2. Keeping your head straight, hold one end of the dot card against the tip of your nose. Hold the card straight or angled slightly downwards in a position where you can see all the dots properly.
3. Look at the furthest dot, and make sure you are only seeing one dot. When you see this furthest dot as a single dot, count to 10 slowly, whilst keeping the dot single.
4. Once you can do this, look at the next dot up. When this dot appears as a single dot, all the other dots should appear double, making an X pattern and crossing through the dot you are looking at. Again, hold this position, keeping the dot single for a count of 10 (please see image 1).

- Continue in the same way up the line of dots, making sure each one is a single dot and holding each dot for a count of 10.
- Remember to RELAX your eyes after the exercise (please see the 'Home exercises: Relaxation' leaflet for more information).

**Image 1:**



## **Key points to remember:**

- Try to make sure that you make a conscious effort to 'pull' your eyes in to look at the dots. It may feel as though you are going 'cross-eyed' whilst trying to this. This is normal and is necessary to achieve results
- Take each dot in turn, slowly. Do not move up to the next dot until you are able to hold the previous one single for a count of 10.
- If you are unable to make even the furthest dot as a single dot – don't give up!
- If you can only get a short way down the dots, but no further – keep practising!
- It is a challenging exercise, but practise will make it easier
- As with any form of new exercise, your eyes may feel more tired or uncomfortable and you may get a headache when you first begin exercising. This is because you are using muscles that are not used to working as hard as they should be. This is normal and it will get easier as the muscles get stronger

## What if I cannot make the further dot single?

- If you are struggling, you could try holding the card a short distance away from your nose (and bring the card back to the tip of your nose as you improve)
- The orthoptist may make you an extended dot card to use if you experience extreme difficulty

**It is important that you attend your Orthoptic appointments as advised by the orthoptist to monitor whether the exercises are helping to improve your condition and adjust the exercises given as needed. If you are unable to attend an appointment, please call our appointments team on telephone number: 01772 524010.**

## Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact the Orthoptic team on telephone number: **01772 522417** (Monday to Friday between 8.30am to 4.40pm). If the Orthoptists are not available when you call, there is a 24-hour answerphone where you may leave a message.

Orthoptic Department:  
Broughton Suite (near the main entrance),  
Royal Preston Hospital,  
Sharoe Green Lane,  
Preston.  
PR2 9HT

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)  
[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)  
[www.squintclinic.com](http://www.squintclinic.com)  
[www.orthoptics.org.uk/patients-and-public/](http://www.orthoptics.org.uk/patients-and-public/)

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[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

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**Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.**

**This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.**

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**Division:** Surgery

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