

Information for patients and carers

Home exercises: Jump convergence

Treatment of convergence insufficiency

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy bands of blue. The top band is a light blue, the middle is a medium blue, and the bottom is a dark blue.

What is the aim of this exercise?

The aim of this home exercise is to be able to look from a distance object back to the pen held at the end of your nose and to do so easily without extra effort.

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).

Note: For the purposes of these instructions, a pen is described. The instructions are the same whether a pen or stick/ other target is used.

Instructions

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

1. Keeping your head held straight, hold a pen at arms-length in front of you, at eye level.
2. First, look into the distance at an object on the wall (e.g., a clock) at least 3 metres away (you need to stand or sit with the distant object facing you straight ahead).
3. After looking at the distance object for a second or two, look back at the tip of the pen held in front of you. Make sure the pen is single (and not doubling up).
4. Then, look back at the distance object and whilst doing this, move the pen slightly closer to you; 3-4cm is enough. Look back at the pen and ensure it is single again.

5. If it is not single, continue to look at it and use your eye muscles to 'pull' the images together to make one pen again. Once you see the pen as single, try to keep it single for at least 10 seconds.
6. If you are unable to make it single again, despite trying hard to do so, try taking the pen back a short distance.
7. Repeat this 'jumping' exercise by moving the pen slightly closer to your nose each time you look back in the distance. Ensure the pen is single each time you look back at it.
8. Remember to RELAX your eyes after the exercise (please see the 'Home exercises: Relaxation' leaflet for more information).

Key points to remember:

- Try to make sure that you make a conscious effort to 'pull' your eyes in to look at the pen. It may feel as though you are going 'cross-eyed' whilst trying to this. This is normal and is necessary to achieve results
- This exercise will get increasingly difficult as the pen gets closer to your nose
- 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
- Try not to 'make the pen single' by closing one eye or blinking. This will not exercise the eye muscles. Just blink normally during the exercise
- It is a challenging exercise, but practise will make it easier. Don't give up!

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
www.nhs.uk
www.accessable.co.uk
www.patient.co.uk
www.squintclinic.com
www.orthoptics.org.uk/patients-and-public/

Follow us on social media @lancshospitals

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

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.

Department: Orthoptic and Optometry

Division: Surgery

Production date: November 2023

Review date: November 2026

JR 1050 v1