Convergence Insufficiency

Simple vision exercises are easily taught in the Eye Centre. These exercises are recognized as an effective therapy for convergence weakness.

As we look at objects up close we pull both eyes together towards the nose. This is called convergence. Convergence insufficiency or convergence weakness occurs when a person cannot pull both eyes towards the nose. Convergence insufficiency is a common cause of eye discomfort and affects 3 to 5% of the population. People with convergence insufficiency may often notice eye fatigue, eye strain, eye soreness, headaches, blurred vision or double vision. These problems often occur during reading or close up viewing.

People may even notice that words “run together” when they read.

Convergence weakness may be due to an eye muscle problem or it may be related to other types of eye problems or general health problems.

Eye Muscle Exercises

‘Pencil push-ups’ are done by watching a simple object move towards your nose. Move a pencil towards your nose and try to see a single pencil. When the pencil doubles into two, stop, and try to pull or focus your eyes together in order to see one pencil again. Most exercising feels uncomfortable at first. This is the best way to help your eye muscles work together as a team. By repeating this ‘push-up’ exercise you notice improvements to your eye muscle strength. If you become good at this exercise there are other exercises to improve your eye muscles and your reading comfort.

Myth

“Crossing your eyes is bad for you”

Crossing your eyes is good exercise. Being able to cross your eyes is an important eye muscle activity. When we read or perform near vision activities, our eyes need to cross.
Eye Muscle Exercises

If your eye muscle weakness is not helped by regular convergence exercises, you may need:

- a change to your glasses
- prisms
- eye muscle surgery
- further investigation

Our Approach

Try to perform your exercises daily for 5 to 10 minutes

Keep track of the changes to your eye comfort near vision and reading comfort.

Examination

Orthoptists assess, diagnose and treat eye muscle disorders

Be sure to get eye muscle testing from your ophthalmologist or orthoptist. These health professionals assess, diagnose and treat disorders of the eye muscles and convergence insufficiency.

Orthoptists:

- are eye muscle specialists
- diagnose the different types of convergence insufficiency
- determine how this problem relates to your eye muscles and general health
- evaluate the severity of your condition
- determine the impact the problem is having on your vision tasks
- design the most effective treatment program for your needs