



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Vestibular and Cawthorn Cooksey exercises

ENT Department

Patient information

These exercises are training activities used to help those who experience balance disorders.

## What are the aims of the exercises?

- Relaxing the neck and shoulder muscles.
- Training the eyes to move independently of the head.
- Practising good balance in everyday situations.
- Practising the head movements that cause dizziness (to help the development of vestibular compensation).
- Improving general co-ordination.
- Encouraging natural spontaneous movement.

## Exercises

- Make sure that you are in a safe environment before you start any of the exercises to reduce the risk of injury.
- All exercises should be performed slowly to begin with and gradually progress to faster movements.
- Exercises should be performed **3 times a day**.

### Level 1: Eye movements (head kept still)

1. Look up then down, slowly at first, then rapidly **20 times**.
2. As above but side to side.
3. Focus on fingers at arm's length. Maintain focus while moving fingers towards nose and away again **20 times**.

### Level 2: Head and eye movements (sitting)

1. Bend head forwards and backwards (eyes open).  
Do this slowly then quickly.
2. As above. Rotating to the left and then to the right.
3. Repeat both of the above but with eyes closed.

### **Level 3: Arms and body movements (sitting)**

1. Shrug shoulders **20 times**.
2. Circle shoulders **20 times**.
3. Rotate to the right and then to the left, at waist (i.e: upper part of the body moves together) **20 times**.
4. Turn head side to side through full range of rotation, slowly.
5. Repeat above doing two slow turns followed by one rapid turn.
6. Repeat above followed after a couple of seconds pause, by three rapid turns.
7. Repeat above turning with eyes closed.

### **Level 4: Arm and trunk movements (standing)**

1. Repeat all level 3.
2. Sit down and stand up **20 times** with eyes open.
3. Sit down and stand up **20 times** with eyes closed.

## **Where can I get further information?**

### **Ménière's Society**

Telephone **01306 876883**

[www.meandve.org.uk](http://www.meandve.org.uk)

### **Brain and Spine Foundation**

Telephone **0808 8081000**

[www.brainandspine.org.uk](http://www.brainandspine.org.uk)

# Who can I contact with any concerns or questions?

If you have any problems or are worried, please do not hesitate to contact us in the Ear, Nose and Throat Outpatient Department.

## Royal Sussex County Hospital

ENT Department

01273 696955 Ext. 64813

## Worthing Hospital

ENT Department

01903 205111 Ext. 84067

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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in St Richard's Hospital and Worthing Hospital.

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