

BALANCE TRAINING EXERCISES

Your doctor has determined that you have a balance problem that may improve with a rehabilitation program. Head motion stimulates the balance canals of the inner ear. Like a figure skater just learning to spin on skates, you can expect it will take some time for your balance to improve. The brain must learn to overcome the feeling of dizziness. Virtually all patients using these exercises will note improved balance, but it may take a few weeks. **DON'T GIVE UP!** It is important to start slowly because quick head movements can make you lightheaded at first. Slowly increase the speed and duration of exercises as tolerated. It is common for people to become dizzy during some of these exercises; this is a required part of the healing process. As in athletics: no pain, no gain.

CAWTHORNE'S HEAD EXERCISES

Cawthorne's exercises should be carried out for 5 minutes, 10 times a day. You can expect dizziness when beginning; this feeling should lesson over time with repetition. Please be seated while doing them.

Eye Exercises: Look up, then down-at first slowly, then quickly 20 times. Look from one side to the other-at first slowly, then quickly 20 times. Try to focus on an object at the end of each eye rotation.

Head Exercises: With eyes open, bend head forward, then backwards-at first slowly, then quickly 20 times. Turn head from one side to the other-at first slowly, then quickly 20 times. As dizziness lessens, these head exercises should be done with the eyes closed.

Sitting/Bending: While sitting, shrug shoulders 20 times. Turn shoulders to the right, then to the left 20 times. Bend forward and pick up objects from the ground and sit up, 20 times.

Standing: Change from sitting to standing position, and back again, 20 times. Do this initially with eyes open. As balance improves, do this with eyes closed (but only if you have a partner to help you). Throw a small rubber ball (or similar object) from hand to hand above eye level. Throw the object from hand to hand under one knee.