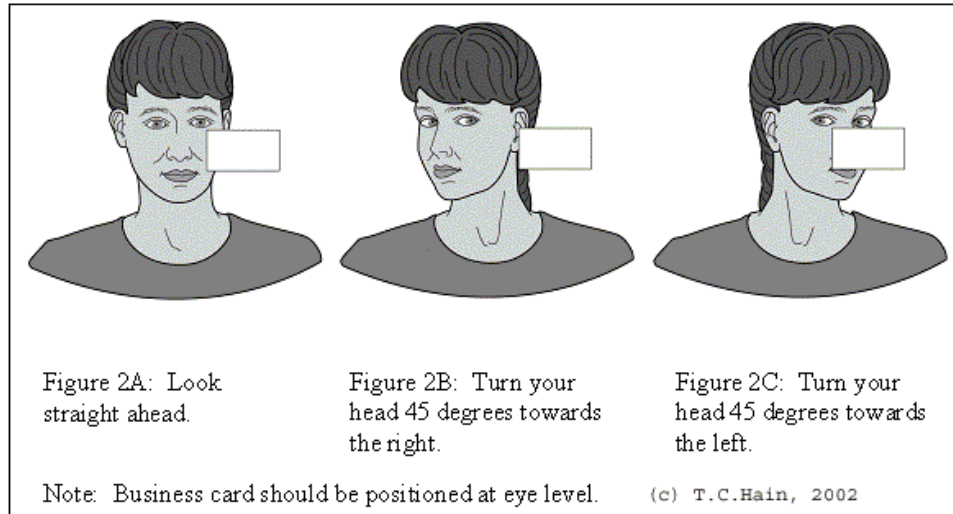




GAZE STABILIZATION EXERCISES



Procedures and Goals of Gaze Stabilization Exercises:

The goal of these exercises is to help you be able to move your head and stabilize your gaze so that you train yourself your system to not evoke ongoing symptoms of visual strain, dizziness or vertigo with these types of movements.

Start by taping a business card on the wall directly in front of you centered between your eyes. You can begin either sitting or standing, whichever is most stable and safe for you to begin. As noted in the figure above, begin by holding a good head and neck posture. Start by focusing on the business card and move your head to the right while keeping your eyes focused on the card and maintaining good posture. Pause briefly and return to the centre while maintaining focus of eyes on the card. Repeat with head movement to the left. Begin with simpler exercises, and progress to harder ones when you are able to without symptoms aggravation.

Simpler:

- Start with slow and controlled motions to each side. Pause at each side briefly and pause in the centre. Remember to keep breathing throughout these exercises. For example, breathe out relax you ribcage and sternum, lengthen your neck and turn head to the right, while keeping eyes fixed on the card. Breathe in and return to neutral. This will help to maintain calm in your nervous system, although some symptoms may become aggravated with these motions initially.
- Can also add in looking up and looking down into this protocol. Then can add diagonal movements of the head in an X pattern - for example, looking up and to the right and back to centre, looking down and to the left and then back to center.



Progressions:

These exercises incorporate many "dimensions", such as:

1. protocol - ie number of repetitions to each directions
2. speed/frequency - can vary the speed of movement for example faster movement to the right, pause briefly and then return slowly to centre
3. target distance (near/far) - can move closer or farther away from target, or change size of target. This may be variable depending upon your work - ie if computer screen distance from chair or driving a car with longer distance.
4. background - can change from simple one colour background, to mixed pattern background, or a background outdoors or at environment where you need to use it - ie at your office (different colours, lights, and sounds to process)
5. orientation of head on trunk
6. and orientation of head with respect to gravity.

VISUAL TRACKING

- Hold a pencil or one of your fingers in front of your eyes.
- Keep head still while eyes follow the pencil
- move the pencil horizontally, vertically or on diagonals and have your eyes track the movement
- Progress by repeating with the head in slight rotation

How much do I do this?

These activities should be done each day for periods of up to 30 minutes. Once symptoms become evoked, then it is time to take a rest and allow symptoms to settle. In this case it may be required to do 3 to 4 -10 minute sessions initially to start over the course of a day. Progressing time and endurance first and then progressing the challenge of the activity on the system.

Work with your treating therapist to outline specific needs for your situation. Outline your specific needs here:

If you have any questions about this protocol or would like to be assessed by a physiotherapist, or have a specific question for your current therapist, please do not hesitate to contact us.