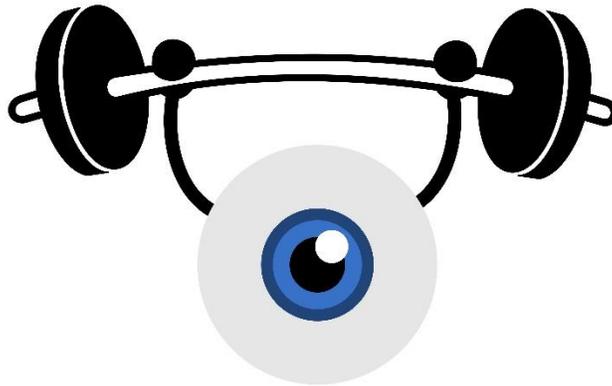
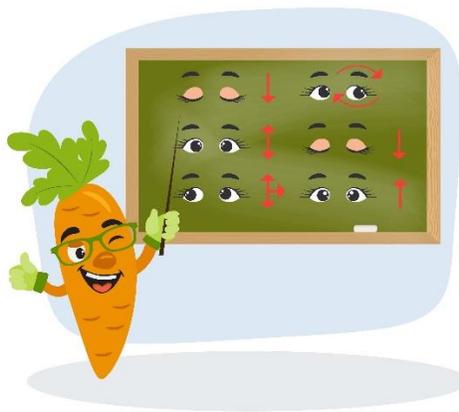


The Comprehensive Eye Exercise Guide:
7 Effective Ways to Boost Your Eye Health



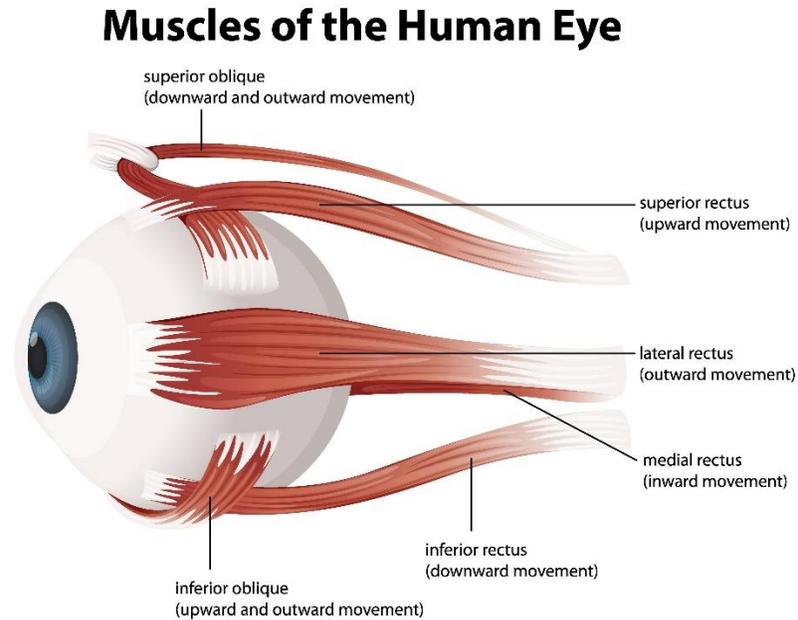
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When you think of exercise, your mind most likely will automatically conjure up thoughts of gyms, lifting weights, or sweating over a yoga mat and such. But did you know that your eyes need exercise as well? Your eyes are actually connected by muscles that help them move in the direction you want to look, and these muscles, just like any other muscles in your body, need to be strengthened for optimal performance.



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Eye Muscles and Their Functions



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There are 6 main extraocular muscles responsible for eye movement, and 1 muscle that moves our eyelids. Named similarly to other muscles in our body, these consist of 4 rectus muscles and 2 oblique muscles. These muscles collectively help our eyes look left and right, upwards and downwards, sideways and angular. The levator palpebrae superioris (LPS) muscle is responsible for raising the eyelids. When any of these muscles are either too weak or are not functioning optimally, you can suffer from the symptoms of eye movement disorders.

Common Eye Movement Disorders

1. Convergence Insufficiency (CI)

In convergence insufficiency, individuals have difficulty turning their affected eye inward to focus on objects due to eye muscle dysfunction. Normal eye muscles are able to converge and allow the eyes to turn inward to properly focus on a single image. Without this convergence, activities like reading can be very difficult, and sufferers may also experience double vision. CI can also cause symptoms such as headaches, eye fatigue, word overlapping, difficulty concentrating, reading, and squinting.

Vision therapy is the best treatment for CI. In a randomized clinical trial, 75% of all children either had full correction of their vision or saw marked improvements by 12 weeks.

2. **Strabismus**

Strabismus occurs when both eyes don't properly align with one another to work together. This can be due to eye muscle or nerve dysfunction. This can happen some of the time, or be constant in some people. It can also affect just one eye, or both eyes alternately. With strabismus, there is usually a visible misalignment of the eyes, and the misaligned eye will appear to be looking in a different direction from the object being viewed.

Depending on the direction the misaligned eye is facing, it can be called:

- a. *Esotropia* – when the eye is facing inward, it is called esotropia, more commonly known as “cross-eyed.”
- b. *Exotropia* – this occurs when the misaligned eye is facing outward and is also known as “wall-eyed.”
- c. *Hypertropia* – in hypertropia, the misaligned eye faces upwards.
- d. *Hypotropia* – in hypotropia, the misaligned eye faces downwards.

If the strabismus is mild or intermittent, sometimes vision therapy is prescribed and has shown vast improvements.

3. **Amblyopia**

Amblyopia is the medical term for what’s commonly known as “lazy eye.” In this eye disorder, vision fails to be corrected even with glasses or contacts lens. It typically occurs during early childhood and usually affects one eye. Early treatment includes vision therapy and can help avoid permanent vision loss in the affected eye.

Vision therapy in the form of video games, such as RevitalVision, have helped to improve vision by 2 or more lines on a standardized eye chart, in adults and children with chronic amblyopia.

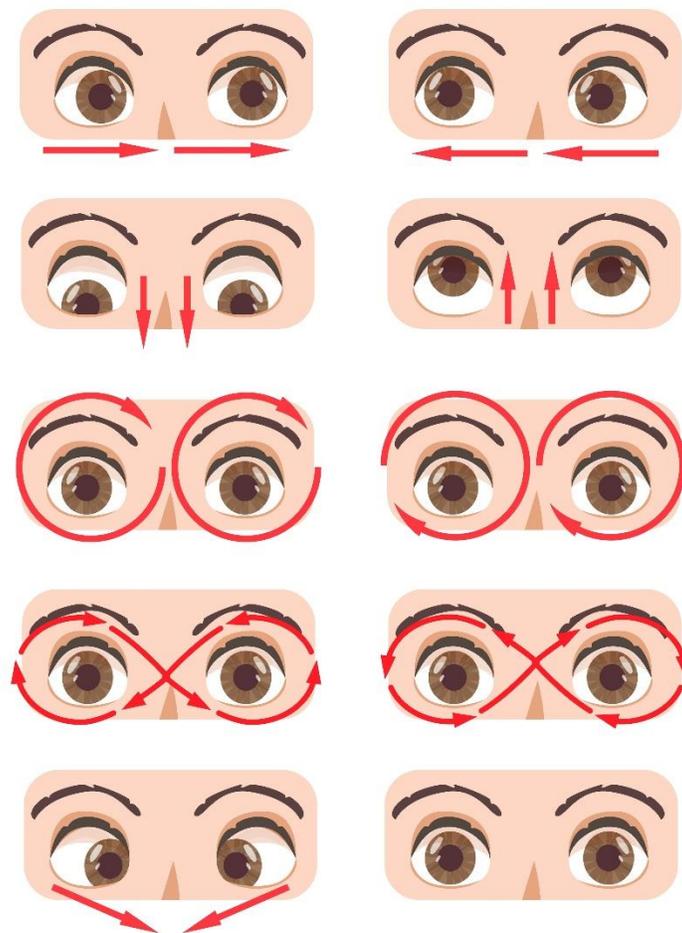
4. **Astigmatism**

Astigmatism is a condition that occurs when the cornea is shaped more like an American football than the soccer ball shape it should have. This causes it to have refractive errors

that result in blurred or distorted images and can lead to eye strains, headaches, and more. It can easily be corrected with eyeglasses or vision correction surgery.

Although eye exercises cannot “cure” astigmatism, they can still help with some of the symptoms of eye strain and discomfort.

EYES EXERCISES



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Benefits of Eye Exercise

Performing regular eye exercises has a multitude of benefits, including alleviating symptoms associated with eye movement disorders. In addition to strengthening your eye muscles, you can also improve the muscle tone and blood circulation of these muscles. They also help to reduce eye strain and combat eye fatigue.

Combined with other vision-protecting aids such as prescription glasses, blue light filtering glasses, and vitamin supplements, these exercises can have an overall positive effect on the health of your eyes and allow them to achieve the sharpest vision possible.

Without further ado, let's get to these simple and effective exercises!

1. Pencil Push-Ups



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It's probably hard to imagine your eyes doing push-ups but this is quite a simple trick that's effective and especially helpful for convergence insufficiency.

To perform a pencil push-up, hold a pencil away from you at arm's length, and focus on the tip of it. If there's a letter on the pencil somewhere, focus on that instead. Then slowly bring it closer and closer to your nose, all the while keeping the tip or letter in focus.

Once it becomes doubled, start moving it away again, slowly. Repeat this 3-5 times a day.

2. **Figure Eight**

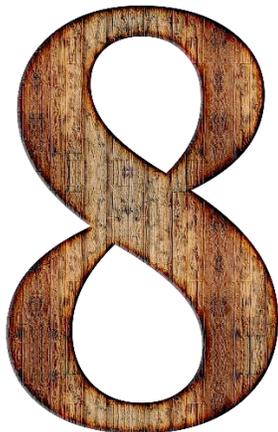


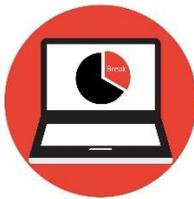
Figure eights can help improve the flexibility of the eye muscles and the efficiency with which your eyes can track an object. Start this exercise by finding a point on the floor or wall around 8 feet away, then start tracing an imaginary figure 8 with your eyes. Do this for around 30 seconds, and then trace it in the reverse direction.

And another super sweet bonus? According to some, regularly performing this exercise

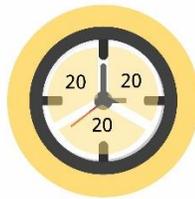
can help prevent the presence of myopia (nearsightedness).

3. 20-20-20 Rule

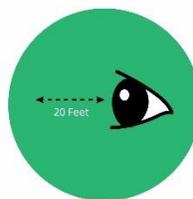
The 20-20-20 Rule



Take a Break
for 20 Seconds



Every 20 Minutes



Look at an Object
20 Feet Away

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This popular eye exercise helps to reduce digital eye strain and is especially helpful for those who spend a lot of time in front of their screens. To perform this simple exercise, focus on something 20 feet away, for 20 seconds, every 20 minutes. If you tend to forget, try setting a timer every 20 minutes.

4. Barrel Card



Wikihow

This exercise trains the eyes to converge, or turn inwards, to view an object nearby. It is especially helpful for strabismus. For this exercise, start by taking an index card and drawing 3 barrels of different sizes (small, medium, and large) on the card in **red** marker. Then on the back of the card, repeat this but with a **green** marker.

To begin, hold the index card horizontally to your nose, with the largest barrel facing away from you. You should be holding the edge of the card to your nose. Alternately close each eye; one eye should be able to see the red barrels, and the other should see the green barrels. If you cannot see the same amount of the image with both eyes, adjust until there is no tilt.

Now focus both eyes on the barrels furthest away from you. This should cause the two large barrels to overlap so that you can see a red-green circle. Do this for 5 seconds, then shift your gaze to the middle barrel and repeat for another 5 seconds. Lastly, move on to the last barrel. The barrels that you are not focused on will appear doubled, but this is normal.

After completing one cycle of this, close your eyes and relax for 10 seconds. Gradually increase the number of cycles you perform, working your way up to holding your gaze on each circle for 10 seconds a day, for up to 10 cycles.

Additionally, if this exercise seems hard to visualize, try searching “barrel card vision

therapy” on YouTube to see exactly how it’s done. Performing it regularly will be worth your time!

5. **Palming**



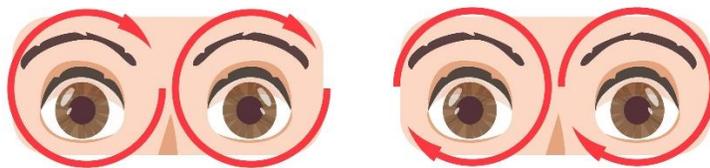
This is a yoga-inspired exercise that helps to relax the eye muscles and reduce eye strain and fatigue. You can do it while sitting or lying down. Simply rub your palms together to warm them up, and then place each corresponding hand gently over your eyes, being careful not to apply much pressure. Stay like this for 5 minutes, breathing deeply. If you have the time, repeat this process a couple of more times.

6. Near and Far Focus



This exercise helps to train your eyes by challenging the focusing system to engage and relax properly. To begin, hold an object with a letter about 10 inches away from your face and focus on the letter for 15 seconds. Alternatively, you can use your thumb and focus on it instead. After the 15 seconds are up, turn your attention to an object about 20 feet away, and focus on that for 15 seconds. Repeat at least 3 times.

7. Eye Circles



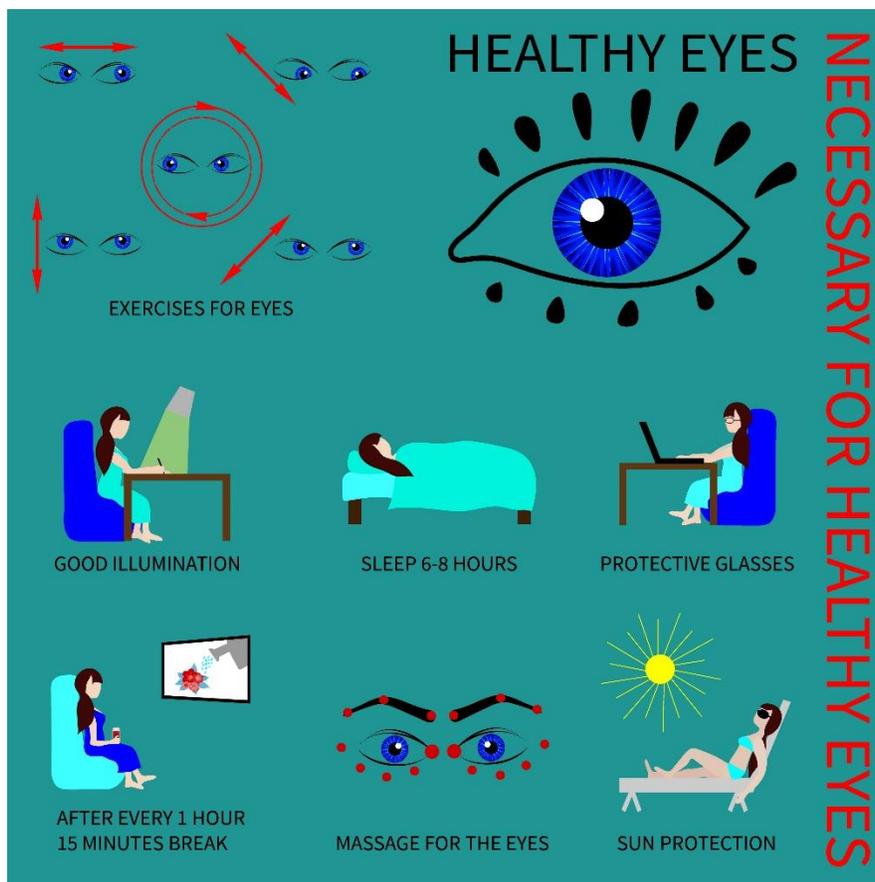
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This exercise can help to give your eye muscles a much-needed “stretch.” To perform it, look ahead and move your eyes in a clockwise direction, drawing a wide imaginary circle

with your eyes. Repeat this about 20 times. Take a 10-second break, then repeat the exercise while drawing a circle in the opposite direction.

And there you have it! As long as these exercises are repeated regularly, they can help to strengthen your eye muscles over time, helping to reduce eye strain and fatigue, and even help improve and reverse some eye movement disorders.

Here are some other general things you can do to ensure the best eye health:



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- If you catch yourself staring at a screen for too long, look away and blink every 5 seconds, for a couple of minutes.
- Take regular breaks from screen time.
- Wear blue light filter glasses during screen time, and sunglasses outdoors.
- Choose healthy foods to fuel your eyes, and consider supplementing when necessary.
- Get plenty of rest! 7-8 hours of sleep is important not just for your overall health, but allows time for your eyes to rest and recover as well.

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