

# EYE EXERCISES

When reading or watching something, make sure not to strain your eyes.

Use light bulbs that are 'warm light' bulbs, which have shades of reds and yellows as opposed to the blues of cool whites, because they better duplicate natural sunlight.

Stop reading or focusing (on a computer for example) every 15 minutes or so and refocus on something far away for a few seconds.

Eat foods rich in Vitamin C and beta-carotene, such as carrots, melons, and other yellow/orange fruits and vegetables. Vit B<sub>12</sub> has also been shown to be good as well.

A good cry will keep your eyes well lubricated.

Humidify your surrounding by placing a shallow pan of water near heating sources.

## **PALMING**

**(For physical and mental relaxation, and relief of eye strain)**

Palming can be accomplished simply by covering your eyes with your palms. A good way to do it is to rest your elbow on the table while sitting or while laying on the bed. Do not press against the eyeballs with your palms. This will put pressure on the blood vessels in the eyeballs and reduce circulation of blood and nutrients. Please make sure that your hands are clean. Introducing germs and bacteria to your eyes does not help matters much. Make sure that as much light as possible is blocked out by the palms. The exact position of the palms is up to the individual. Crossing the fingers at the forehead usually helps. Put yourself in a comfortable position and keep your eyes closed, behind the palms, and relax. Imagine pleasant scenery such as floating clouds in a blue sky, a peaceful sunrise at the top of the mountains.

At the beginning, you may see swirling colours or grey patches. As you relax, you will notice the visual field becoming blacker and blacker. This is a sign that both your mind and body have relaxed, and your visual system is working harmoniously. Once you are able to achieve perfect blackness, clarity returns.

Do it as often as you can, whenever you feel that your eyes are tired. Palming helps a lot in refreshing bleary eyes.

While you are palming, you can visualise anything, as long as it doesn't cause stress. For example, you can visualise your plans for the today when you are lying in bed. Make the images as vivid and real as possible. Feel yourself getting drawn into the images that you conjure up in your mind. This use of visual imagery activates your right-hemisphere and may increase creativity and promote imagination.

**Note:** The above palming exercise is possibly THE most effective of all eye exercises

## **BLINKING**

**(Eye Relaxation Technique)**

This one is a real help if you have dry eyes. Solution: produce more tears to moisten the eyes. You can stimulate the tear ducts by squeezing your eyes shut really tightly. Then blink normally a few times, and squeeze again. Repeat a few times, and your eyes will feel more relaxed and comfortable.

## **BOUNCING THUMB**

**(To offset ageing eyes)**

Hold out your thumb at arm's length. Move your arm in circles and figure eights, fully extended at first and then closer in. This helps keep your eye muscles fully flexed.

## **CLOCK ROTATION**

**(Strengthens muscles for clearer vision)**

Research has shown that the extraocular muscles play a role in the accommodation of the eye. The theory goes that if you strengthen the muscles it gives you clearer vision. You can try it for yourself, the results are usually quite noticeable even only after a minute.

Pretend that you are looking at the centre of a giant clock face straight ahead of you. Keeping your head still all the while, look up as far as possible towards the 12th o'clock position, hold for 2 seconds, then return to the original position. You must really *feel* the stretch in your eyeballs!

Center - 12th o'clock - hold for 2 seconds - back to centre. Next, do it for the 1 o'clock position, then 2 o'clock and so on.

Always return to the centre before moving on to the next hour. When you have finished one clockwise cycle, do an anticlockwise cycle next. This exercise will stretch your extra ocular muscles, and will make them stronger and more flexible.

## **EYE ROLLS**

**(For physical and mental relaxation, and relief of eye strain)**

Start from the 12 o'clock position, and slowly roll to the 1 o'clock place, then 2 o'clock and so on, until one whole cycle is completed. Remember to stretch as far out as possible all the time. Go slow, and do it properly. No prizes for the fastest roll in the West. Again, this exercise puts your extra ocular muscles through a good workout.

## **NEAR/FAR FOCUSING**

**(For physical and mental relaxation, and relief of eye strain)**

Near point stress has been quoted as a cause of myopia. It refers to the fact that people do too much near work, e.g. reading and computer. Near work causes the eyeballs to strain as they try to focus. As a result, the eyeballs adapts by changing its shape, becoming fatter and more circular.

This exercise will teach the eyeballs to return to its original shape, by simply by focusing near and far. Hold up a finger or a pencil in front of you, about 6 inches away. Choose a

salient object, e.g. a chimney, tree, flag etc. at least 20 feet (6 metres) away. These will be your near and far points respectively. Alternate between the near and far objects, looking at each for about 2 seconds at a time. Repeat until you feel your eyes really working, then persevere some more.

## **SUNNING**

**(Reduces our sensitivity to light and sharpen our eyesight)**

*by William Bates*

The Sun is important for our health. Sunshine enables us to manufacture the Vitamin D that we need. Eyes that have been deprived of sunshine are pale and lifeless. Extreme sensitivity to sunshine is called photophobia. People who are sensitive to light and glare usually solve their problem by wearing sunglasses. But is that a solution or just a stop-gap measure?

Sunglasses prevent our eyes from getting adequate sunlight and causes even greater light sensitivity. The more we wear them, the more we are sensitive to light. Hence a vicious cycle develops!

Sun our eyes. We can reduce our sensitivity to light and sharpen our eyesight. Many people have reported that their vision improve after sunning. If you are worried about the effects of ultraviolet radiation causing skin cancer or cataracts, you don't have to worry if you go by the following guidelines: only do sunning in the morning or evening, never during the hot afternoon sun. Do a moderate amount for each session. There is no need to sun your eyes until you are sunburnt.

Close your eyes and face the sun directly. Slowly move your head left and right to let the sunshine reach every part of your retina. Notice the sun moving in the opposite direction. Breathe deeply and slowly. After this, you can do a variation. Imagine that your eyes shoot laser beams. Using your "eye lasers", trace around the edge of the sun. First do clockwise, then change direction. After sunning, finish-up the session by **palming** for about 2 minutes.

## **SWINGING**

**(Relaxes your body, especially the spine & the eyes, and teaches your eyes to work properly)**

*by William Bates*

**Techniques:**

### **Long Swing (move the entire body)**

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Face the front and do not move the head nor the eyes throughout the exercise. Gently swing your entire body towards the left, lifting your right heel as you do so. Once you have turned 90 degrees, stop. Did you notice that the room seems to be moving? As you move left, it appears to swing in the opposite direction, in this case right.

Now, gently swing towards the right, this time lifting the left heel but still keeping the foot on the ground. Stop once you turn 90 degrees.

The swinging motion in the long swing loosens up the spine. The spine can store a lot of stress and tension after a hard day's work at the office. Do the long swing to

un-creak those bones! But the main benefit comes from seeing the scenery move in the opposite direction. If you don't do it correctly, the view will appear to swing in the same direction! Properly done, this will encourage relaxation of the eye, enabling to vibrate in a smooth and relaxed fashion. The normal eye vibrates very quickly. This allows images formed on the retina of the eye to be sustained. If the retina is made motionless, either by injection of drugs or hard staring, then visual images will fade and you will see an empty grey field instead.

### **Short Swing (move the head alone)**

Do not glaze your eyes nor look hard at the surroundings while doing the swing. Instead feel the illusion of the swing, let the world pass you by.

## **TEST CARD**

**(Can reduce stress and improve eyesight)**

*by William Bates*

Practice reading eye charts every morning. Bates discovered that practice does make perfect. In one of his experiments, he discovered that practicing reading eye charts improved children's eyesight. It is not a matter of memorizing the chart, as a different one was used during each eyesight examination. A possible explanation was that people were worried about getting their eyes tested, and this stress and tension worsened their eyesight. By regularly practicing with a test card, you can eliminate this stress and improve your eyesight too!

Get yourself a small eye chart, preferably on a cardboard base. Look at a letter that you can see clearly. Go around the edges of the letter, slowly tracing the outline. Close your eyes and visualise the black letter for about 10 seconds. After that, repeat with other letters. Breathe slowly and deeply all the while.

Finish the eye exercise with a **palming** session. After regular practice, you will notice that the letters seem clearer and blacker.