

## **BALANCE EXERCISES**

Balance exercises were first developed by Terrence Cawthorne, an English ear doctor. Called Cawthorne Exercises, these seemingly simple maneuvers can often help you regain control of your balance and help you lead a more healthy life. You should do them the first thing in the morning and just before you go to bed. You might get dizzy when you first start the exercises. With time though, your feeling of unsteadiness should gradually lessen or disappear altogether.

It might take 4 weeks before you can do all of the exercises without getting dizzy. Above all else, please be patient!

You should do the exercises in each level at least 10 times before you go on to the next level. Remember to do the exercises twice daily; once on getting up in the morning, and just before you go to bed at night.

### **Level 1 Exercise:**

While sitting on the side of your bed or on a sturdy chair, without moving your neck at all, do the following maneuvers:

- Look up as far as you can with your eyes, then look down as far as you can.
- Look from side to side as far as you can with your eyes.
- Focus your eyes on your index finger when your arm is stretched out in front of you. Then try to maintain focus on that finger as you bring it toward your nose.

### **Level 2 Exercise:**

While sitting on the side of your bed or on a sturdy chair, do each of the following head movements:

- ❑ Bring your head as far back as you can, then touch your chin to your chest.
- ❑ While looking straight ahead, turn your head from side to side as far as you can.
- ❑ Bend or tilt your head from one shoulder to the other as far as you possibly can. Try to touch your ear to each shoulder when you do this exercise.

### **Level 3 Exercise:**

While sitting on the side of your bed or on a sturdy chair, try to do these body exercises:

- ❑ Shrug your shoulders straight upwards, then relax them.
- ❑ Bend over and try to touch the ground with your outstretched fingers then go back to a sitting position.
- ❑ Toss a small ball, such as a golf or a tennis ball, from one hand to the other. Make sure that the ball goes higher than your eyes so you have to look up each time you throw the ball.

### **Level 4 Exercise:**

While standing solidly on both feet, with someone close by if you feel uncomfortable:

- ❑ Alternatively sit and stand.
- ❑ Look up as far as you can without moving your head, then look down as far as you can.

- Look from side to side as far as you can without moving your eyes.
- Focus your eyes on your index finger when your arm is stretched out in front of you. Then try to maintain focus on that finger as you bring it towards your nose.
- Bring your head as far back as you can, then touch your chin to your chest.
- While looking straight ahead, turn your head from side to side as far as you can.
- Bend or tilt your head from one shoulder to the other as far as you possibly can. Try to touch your ear to each shoulder when you do this exercise.
- Pass a ball from one hand to the other under one of your knees.
- Finally, repeatedly sit down and then stand again, turning around in a circle in an opposite direction each time you stand.

### **Level 5 Exercise:**

In a room that doesn't have any throw rugs or other things that you might run into:

- Walk to one corner of the room, turn to your right and return to where you started. When you reach your starting place, turn to your left and return to the corner of the room.
- Walk heel to toe, much like you would on a balance beam, to one corner of the room, turn around and then return to your starting place.
- Put a ball on the floor in the center of the room. Then circle the ball at arm's length, first in a clockwise direction and then in a counterclockwise direction.

## **Level 6 Exercise:**

When you can do all of the exercises in Level 1 through Level 5 without feeling uncomfortable or dizzy, you should then do the following exercises with your EYES CLOSED. You should have someone close by to help you at the beginning.

- While sitting, bring your head as far back as you can, then touch your chin to your chest.
- While sitting, turn your head from side to side as far as you can.
- While sitting, bend or tilt your head from one shoulder to the other as far as you possibly can. Try to touch your ear to each shoulder when you do this exercise.
- Shrug your shoulders straight upwards, then relax them.
- Bend over and try to touch the ground with your outstretched fingers, then go back to a sitting position.
- While standing in one place, alternatively sit and stand.
- Walk across the room, first with your eyes open, then with your eyes closed.

*Reviewed 7/2007.*

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