

Convergence Insufficiency

Reference Number: ULHT-LFT-0771 v5

Issued: November 2023

Review Date: November 2025



This leaflet is for patients who have been diagnosed with convergence weakness.

What is convergence insufficiency?

Convergence insufficiency is a weakness of the mechanism that allows both of your eyes to track inwards as a pair towards your nose. This mechanism holds both of your eyes in the slightly inward position they need to be in for you to read and do near tasks. Therefore, if this mechanism is weak, both eyes are either:

- a) Straining to keep in this position, or
- b) Cannot be held in this convergent position

This may cause double vision, blurred vision when reading, head aches or eyestrain.

What can cause convergence insufficiency?

There are many different causes but the possibilities include a change of occupation involving increased close work, an intensive period of close work (e.g. studying for exams), over work, worry, recent illness or whiplash. Sometimes no reason is found.

What treatment options are available for this condition?

Treatment options include:

- Glasses
- A course of convergence exercises
- Prisms on or in your glasses
- Occlusion (covering) of one eye (in extreme cases)

Your Orthoptist will decide which form of treatment is most suitable for your individual case of convergence insufficiency and will work with you to help your symptoms.

What will happen at my orthoptic appointments?

If you wear glasses, you will need to bring your most up to date reading and distance glasses to all of your appointments.

The aim of orthoptic appointments are to:

- Assess your progress with the treatment that has been given to you
- Give further therapy
- Plan the next step in your treatment

The treatment is targeted at relieving your symptoms. The course of exercises should consist of a series of 3 to 4 appointments at the end of which your progress will be assessed and further treatment may be offered if needed.

The treatment can only be successful if the exercises are carried out regularly at home as shown by your Orthoptist. Attending the appointments alone will not improve your symptoms.

If you have any questions about your treatment, please ask your Orthoptist or contact us directly on 01205 446474.

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust has worked with AccessAble to create detailed Access Guides to facilities, wards and departments at our sites.

www.accessable.co.uk/united-lincolnshire-hospitals-nhs-trust

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please email the Patient Information team at patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk