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EXERCISES FOR THE FLOPPY FACE

If you have any questions concerning this advice sheet, please contact:

**A SENIOR PHYSIOTHERAPIST
on: 01935 384358**

Physiotherapy Department

These are performed on the affected side of the face only (unlike the Brain Reminder exercises). Eventually you will join in with the movement.

Lie flat on your back holding a small mirror in one hand, using your free hand to assist the small weak muscles on the affected side.

The Forehead

Stroke the forehead with your fingers upwards from eyebrow to hairline. Stroking with an ice cube is very stimulating. Hold the ice cube in a piece of kitchen towel and give 10 vigorous strokes in the direction given as if you were striking a damp match.

Look in the mirror and try to brace the forehead by raising the affected eyebrow. Look for wrinkles reappearing, crows feet and worry lines.

The forehead takes the longest to come back, but it is the key to a good recovery.

The Eye

Your eye has lost its normal closure and blinking reflexes and, in order to protect itself, develops a rolling back movement to hide as much as possible under the eyelid. This is called Bell's Phenomena.

It is important for you to be aware of it in order to eliminate it.

- Mark a cross on a piece of paper and hold the paper horizontally in front of you.
- Focus both eyes on the cross and slowly close your eyelids down. Ask a friend to kneel in front of you and tell you to stop eye closure at the point when the eye starts to move upwards.
- Open eyes and repeat.

Repeat the above as often as possible. Never close the eyelid once the eye is raised.

Blinking

This takes longer to restore.

- Flicker the eyelids as fast as possible.
- Tap the bone around the orbit to encourage protection reflexes.

The Cheek

- Support the **good** side of the face with one hand and try to immobilise it.
- Concentrate on the corner of your mouth. Attempt to try and smile. Even if nothing moves, the brain has been reminded of how to smile.
- Massage the cheek in the direction towards the ear, giving a feel of lift. Attempt to hold the cheek in the lifted position.

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