

# Nystagmus



최 광 동

부산대학교 의과대학 신경과학교실

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Nystagmus is an involuntary, to-and-fro movement of the eyes that can result in a reduction in visual acuity and oscillopsia. Nystagmus may be physiologic when occurring normally and serving its normal function or pathologic when occurring abnormally. The presence of Nystagmus can be benign, or it can indicate an underlying visual or otorhino-neurological problem. Nystagmus can have either a jerk (slow and quick phase) or a pendular waveform. Each type of nystagmus is attributable to instability or an inadequacy of specific ocular motor systems, including vestibular, optokinetic, smooth pursuit, fixation and the neural integrator. Through more and more sophisticated video oculagraphy, video oculoscopy and electronystagmography is possible to study the main characteristics of saccadi such as: amplitude and frequency. Mechanisms that cause nystagmus are better understood in some forms, such as acquired periodic alternating nystagmus, than in others, for example acquired pendular nystagmus, for which there is limited knowledge. Pharmacologic, optical, and surgical treatments are available, with the choice of treatment depending on the characteristics of the nystagmus and the severity of the associated visual symptoms. Effective pharmacological treatment exists to reduce nystagmus, particularly in acquired nystagmus and, more recently, infantile nystagmus. However, as there are very few randomized controlled trials in the area, most pharmacological treatment options in nystagmus remain empirical.

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