

Fundamentals of Videonystagmography: Theory, Practice, and Clinical cases

Oculomotor tests: Saccades,
Smooth pursuit, Optokinetic



Learner Outcomes

- After this course, participants will be able to identify and describe the different functional classes of eye movements and their significance in ocular motor control.
- After this course, participants will be able to describe various eye movement recording techniques to capture and analyze eye movements, enhancing diagnostic precision for vestibular and neurological disorders.
- After this course, participants will be able to explain how VNG protocols can be effective in facilitating the assessment, ongoing monitoring, and management of conditions affecting the vestibular system and eye movement regulation.



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- **Specialist Neurologist**
- **Head of department, Vertigo clinic, Aster and Medcare clinic, Dubai**
- **SCE Royal college of physicians, UK (May 2017)**
- **Vestibular assessment and management (American Institute of Balance) (2018)**
- **Fellow of European Board of Neurology (2021)**
- **International vestibular diploma (2021)**
- **Assessment and Management of Vestibular disorders (Yenepoya university, Mangalore) (2022)**
- **35 publications and abstracts**
- **Contributed 2 book chapters on Vertigo**

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Outline of talk



Why and how do eyes move?



Functional classes of eye movements



Eye movements recording techniques



VNG protocols



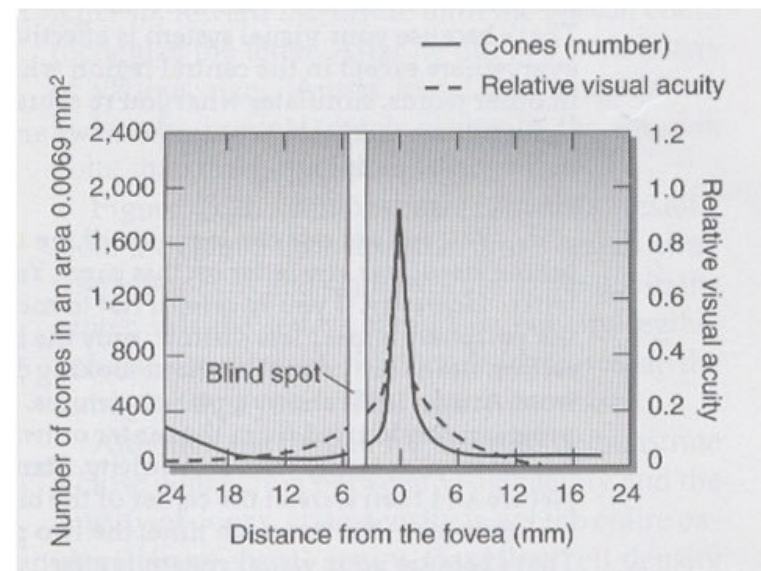
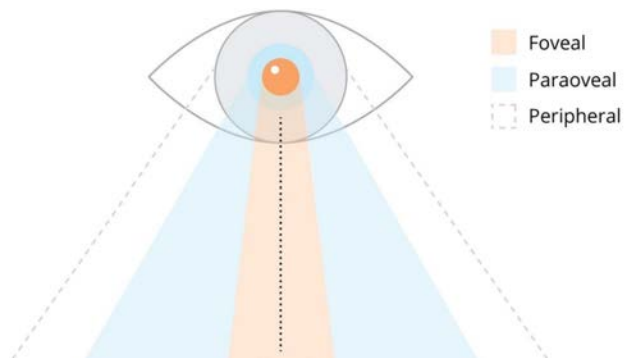
Saccades, Smooth pursuit, Optokinetic



Why do eyes move?

Extra-ocular muscles are at service of vision

Clear vision



The peripheral retina is like a guard & when an object of regard falls upon it, it shouts 'who goes there ; & calls fovea to the spot.

How do eyes move?

Overview of ocular motor control

- Extra-ocular muscles are at service of vision
- Ocular motor nerves are at service of EOM
- Ocular motor nerves originate from Ocular motor nuclei
- They need inter-nuclear connections and supra-nuclear control
- Eye movements needs co-ordination with head movements
- Vestibulo-ocular relfex serves this function

Ocular motor control

Supra-nuclear control

Internuclear control

- Medial longitudinal fasciculus
- Burst neurons
- Omnipause neurons
- Neural integrator

Infra-nuclear control

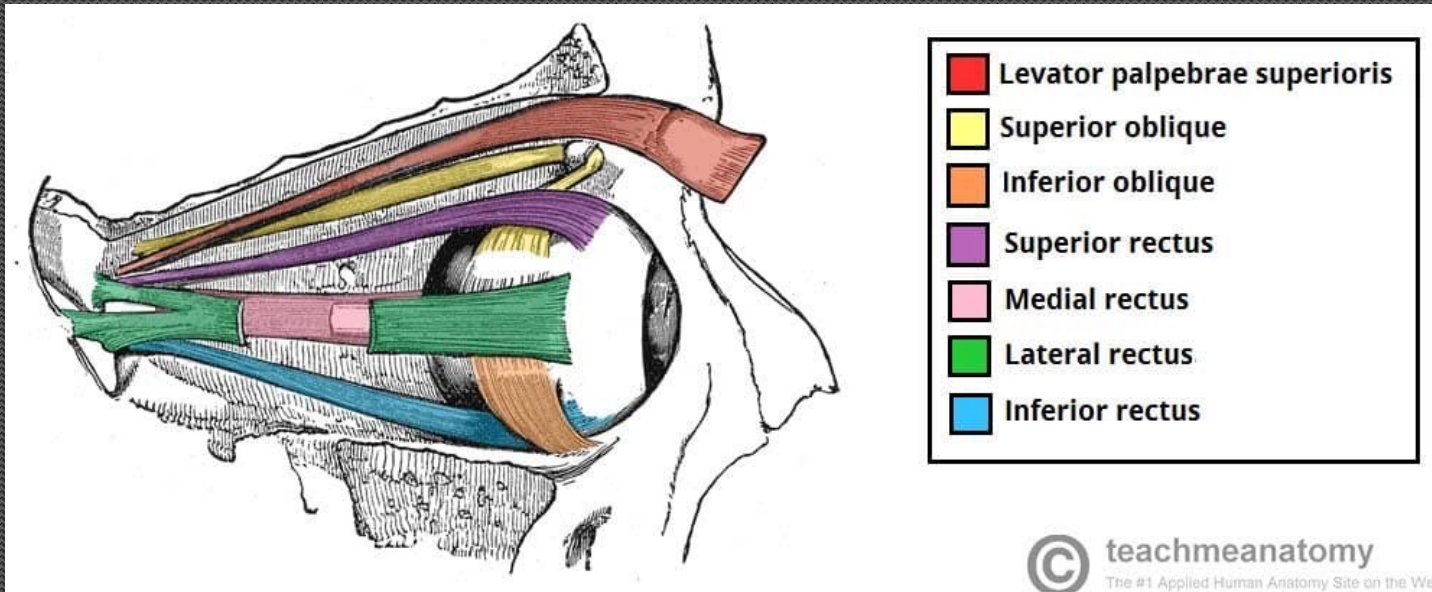
- Oculomotor nerve
- Trochlear nerve
- Abducens nerve

Extra-ocular muscles

Extra-ocular muscles



Extra-ocular muscles



Muscle acting on the
lid

Levator palpebrae
superioris

Muscles acting on
eyeball

Recti

Obliques

Superior rectus

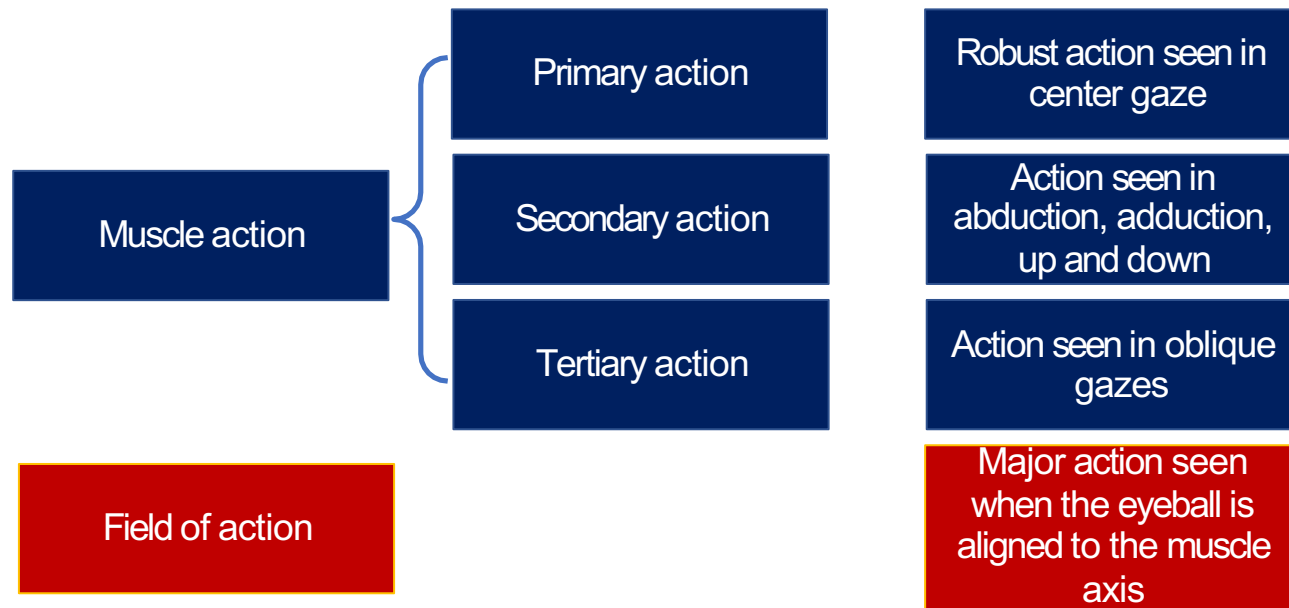
Superior oblique

Inferior rectus

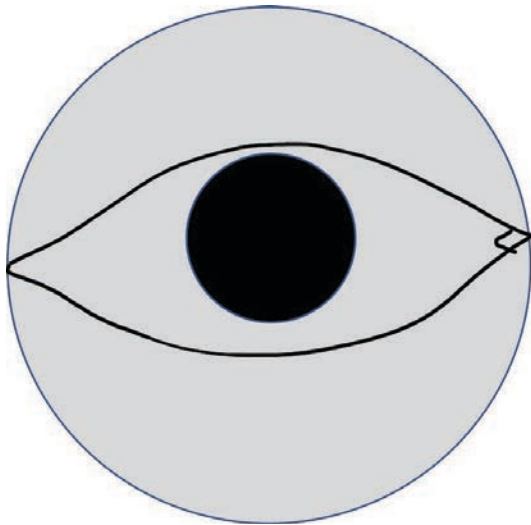
Inferior oblique

Medial rectus

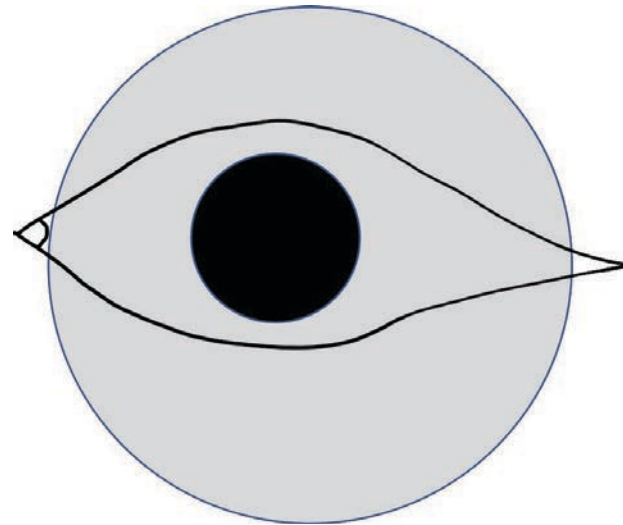
Lateral rectus



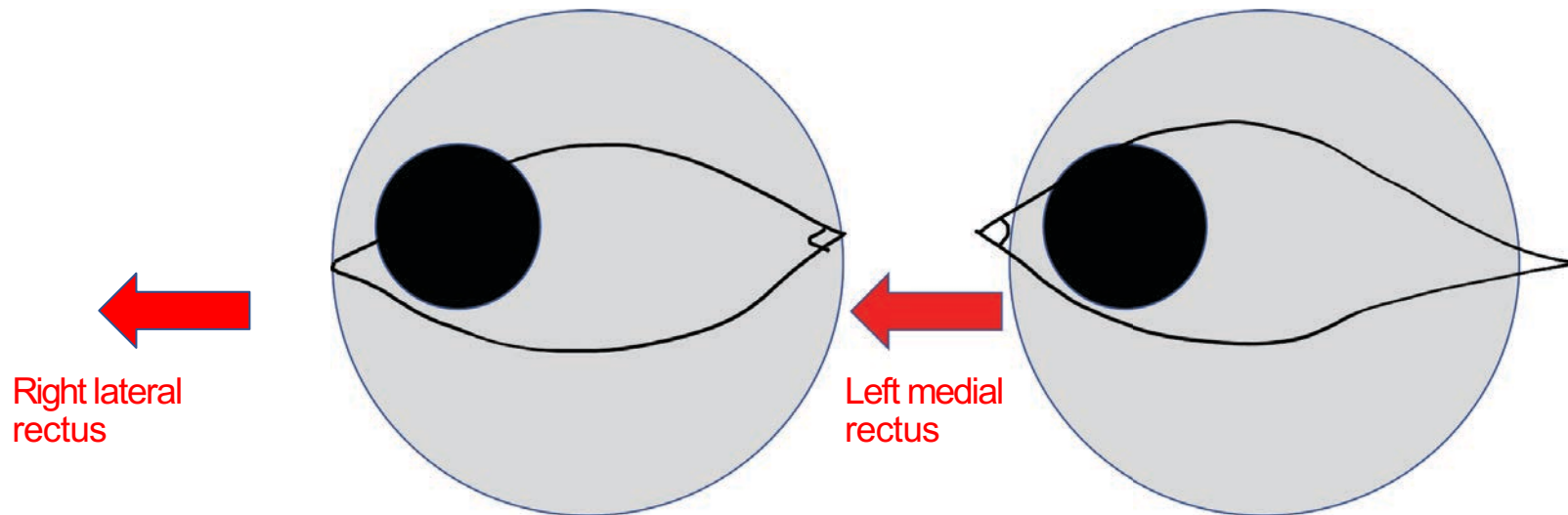
Right eye



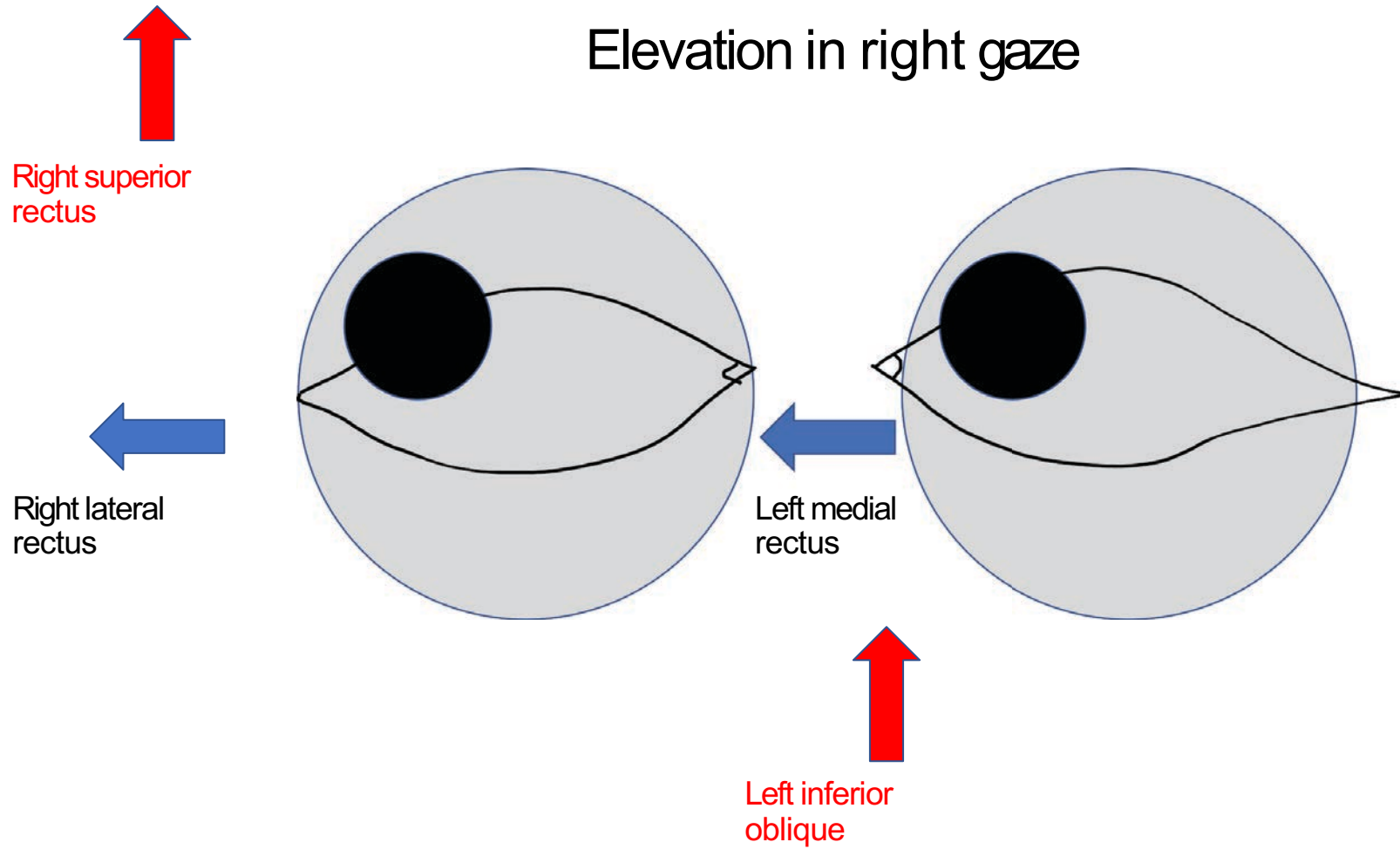
Left eye



Right gaze



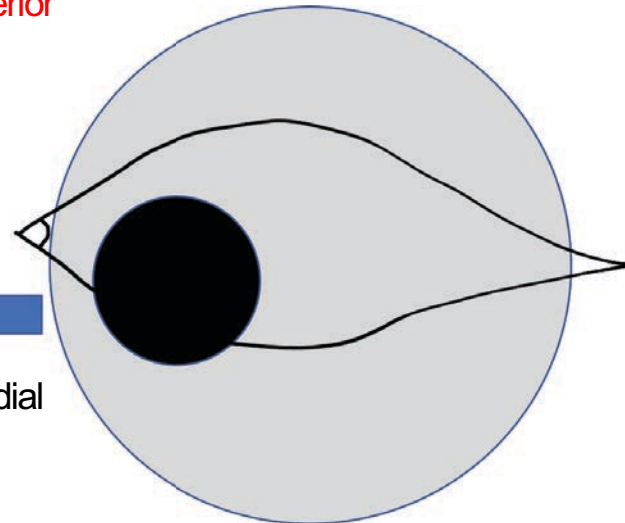
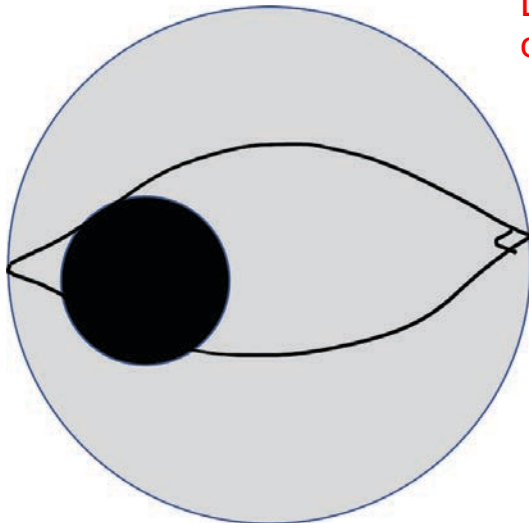
Elevation in right gaze



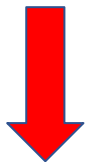
Depression in right gaze



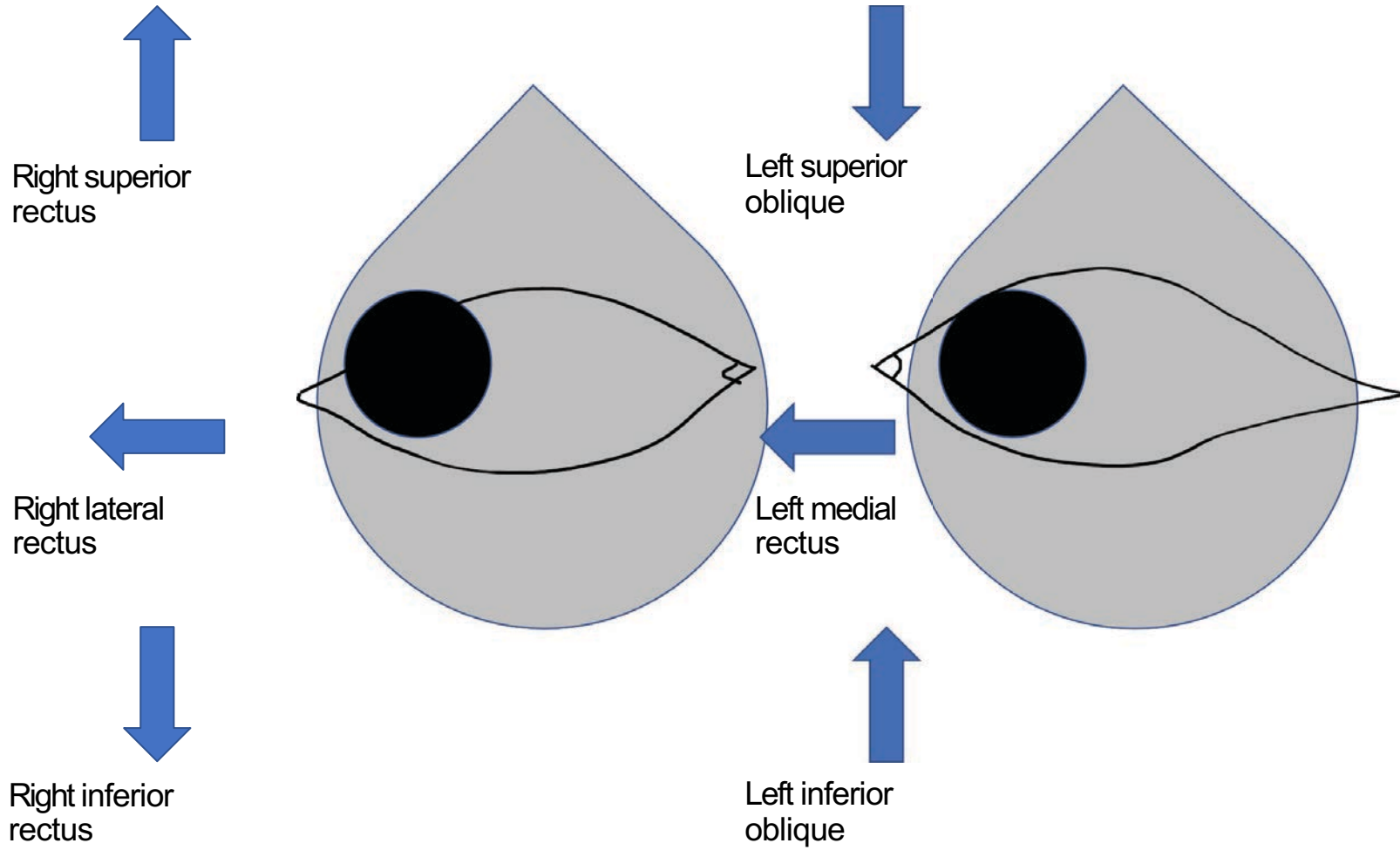
Left superior oblique

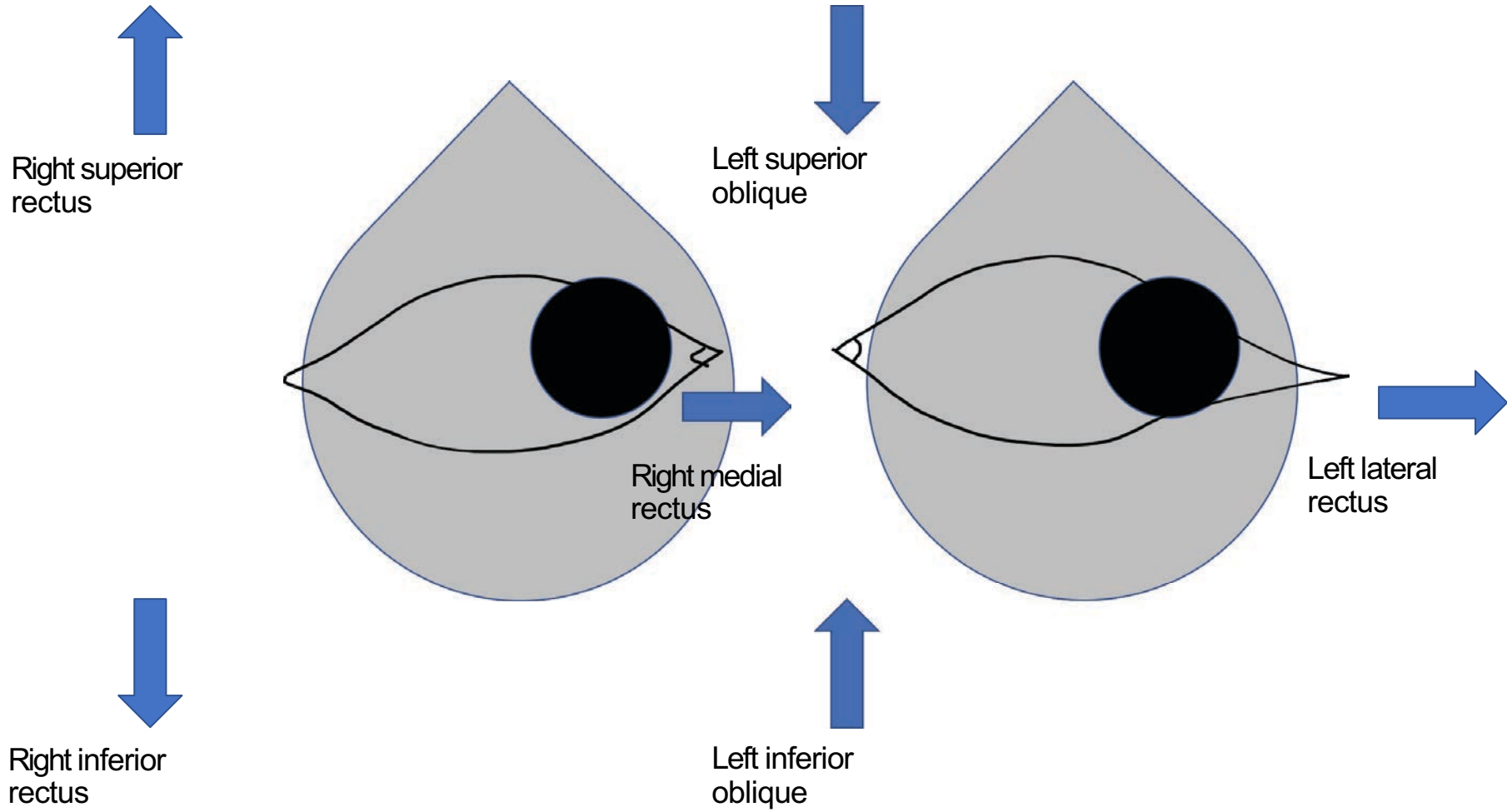


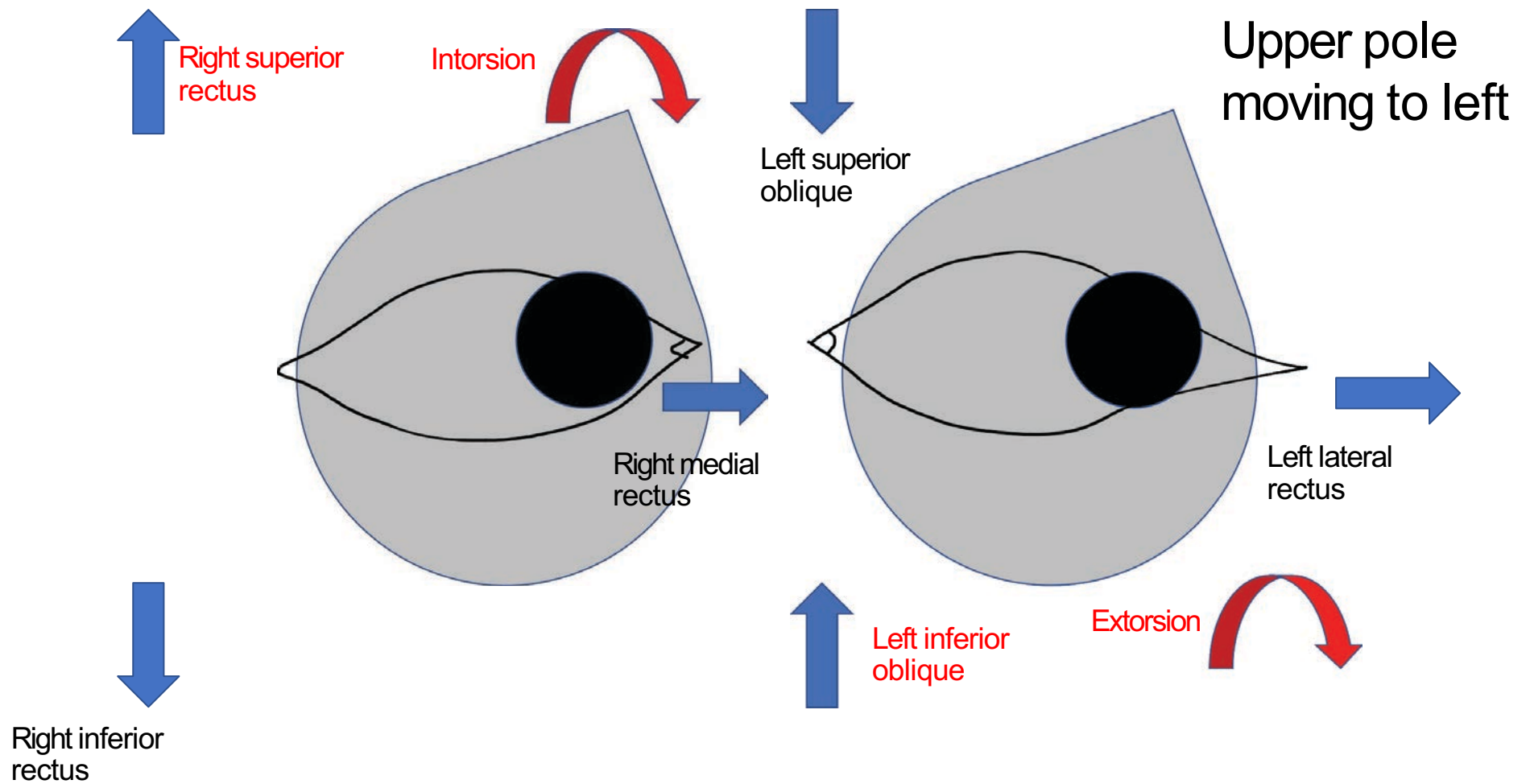
Right medial rectus

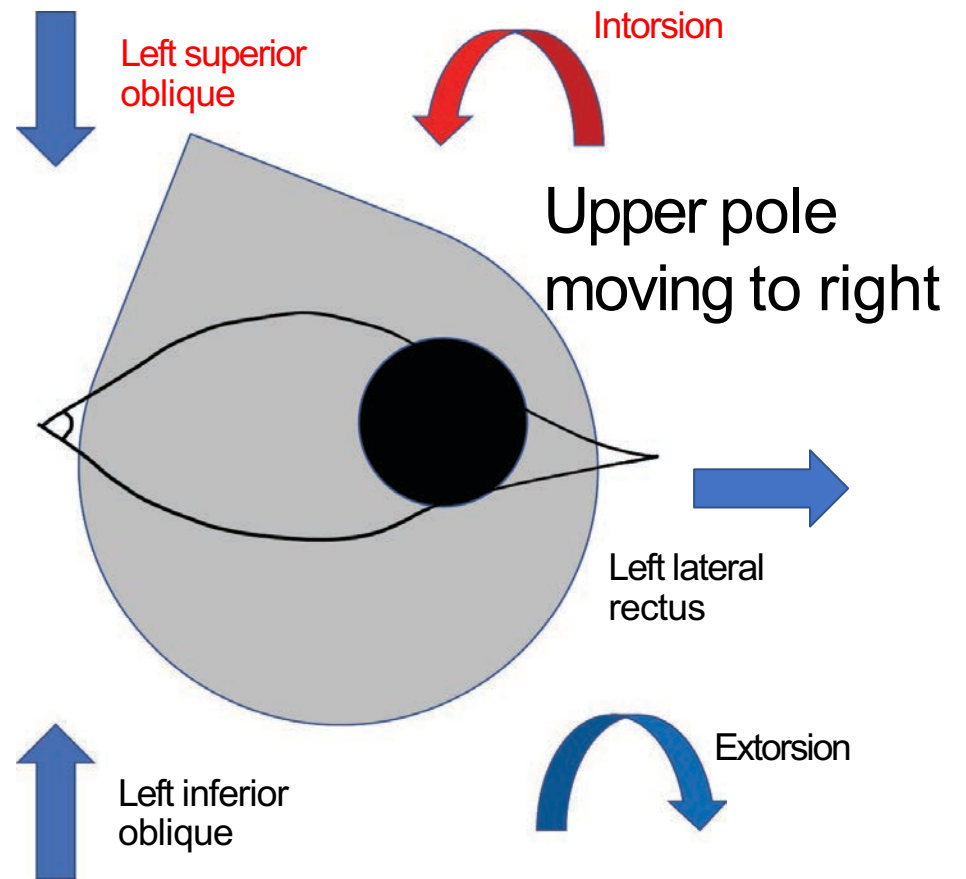
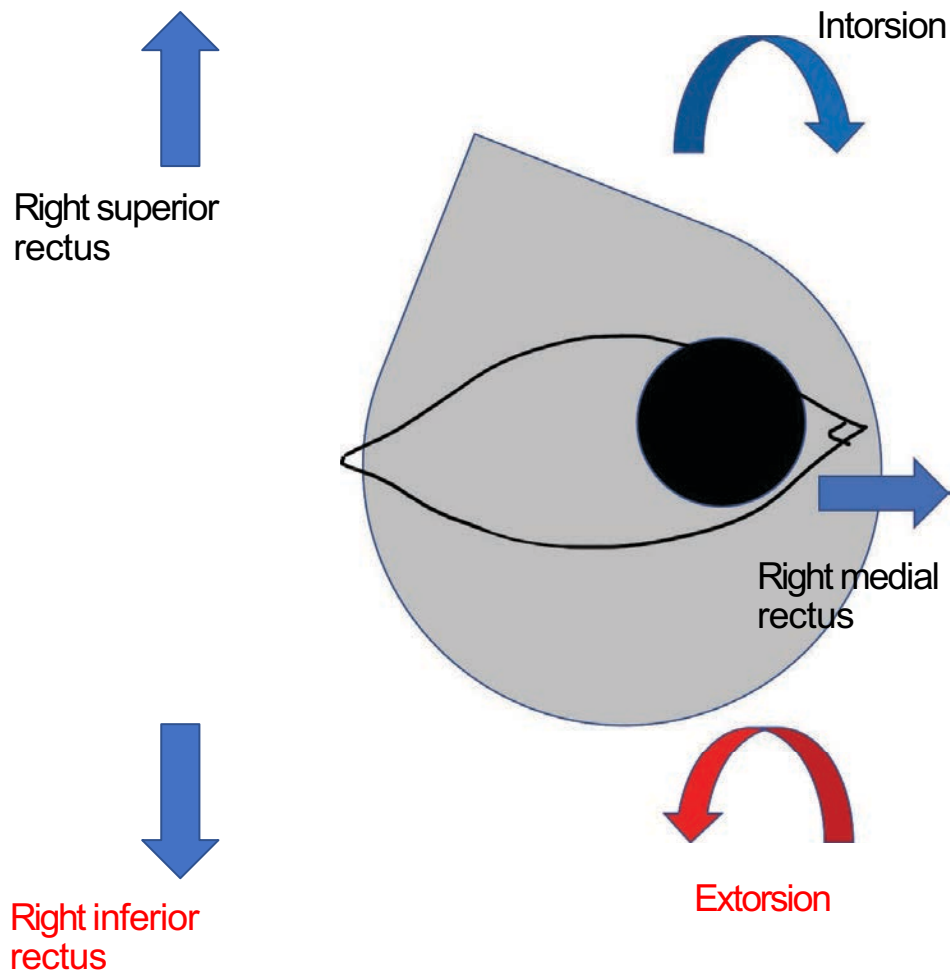


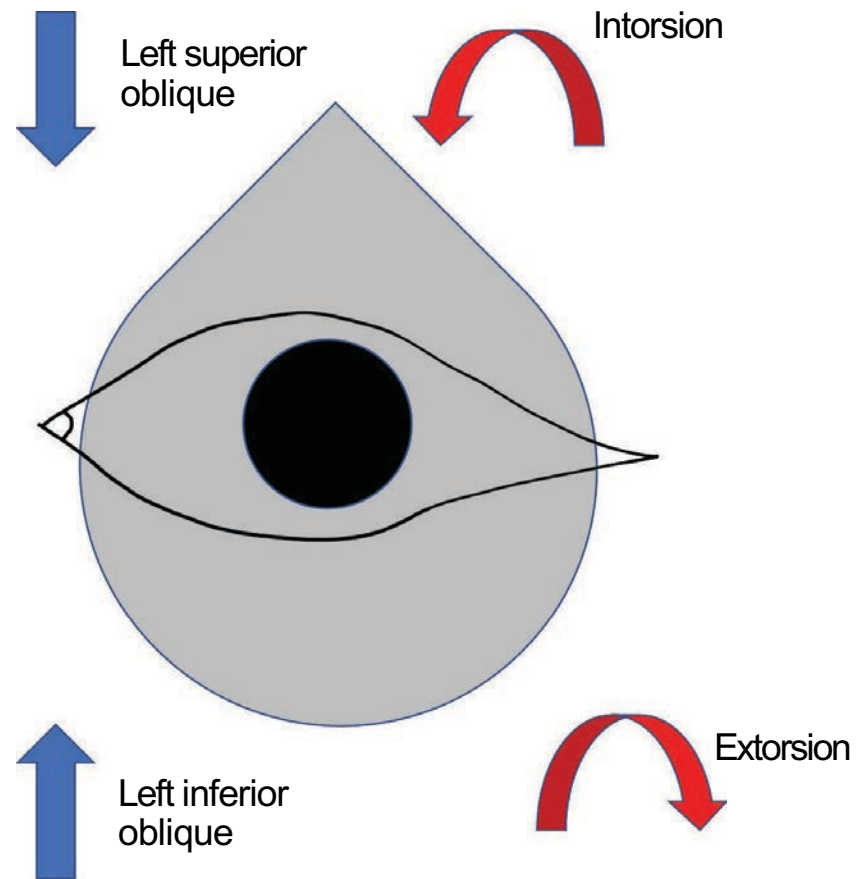
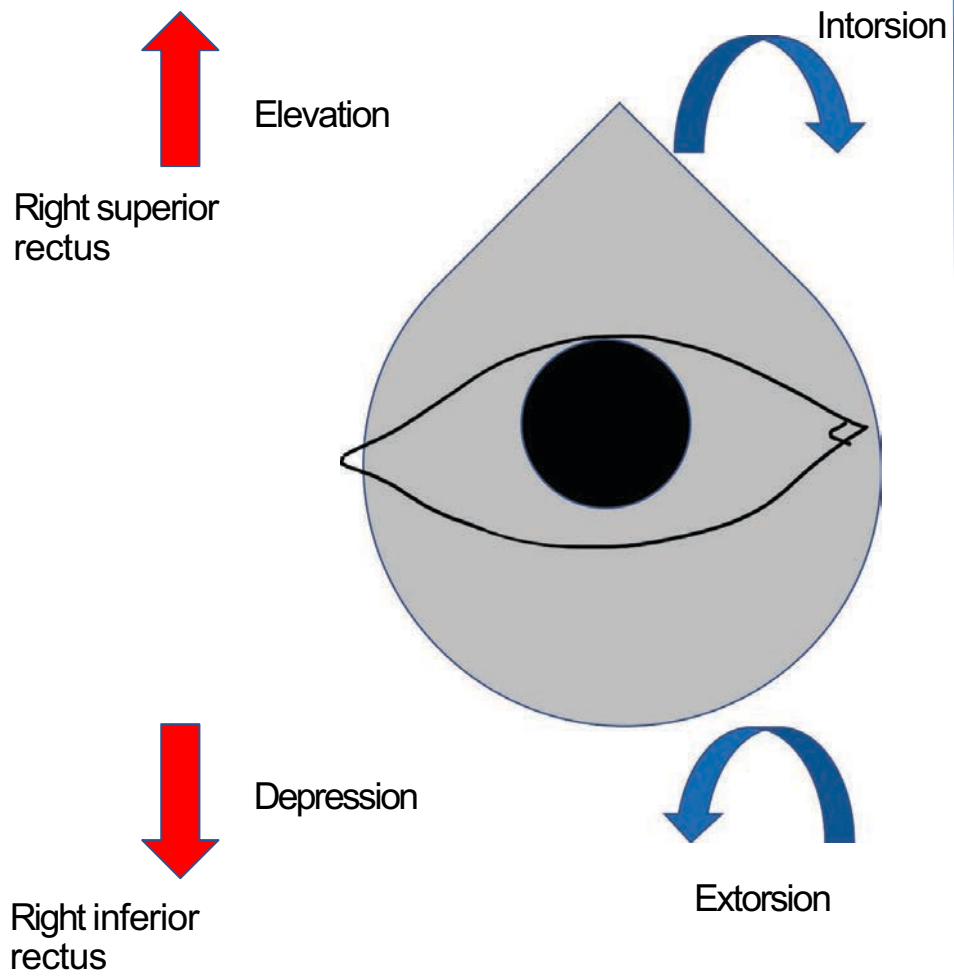
Right inferior rectus

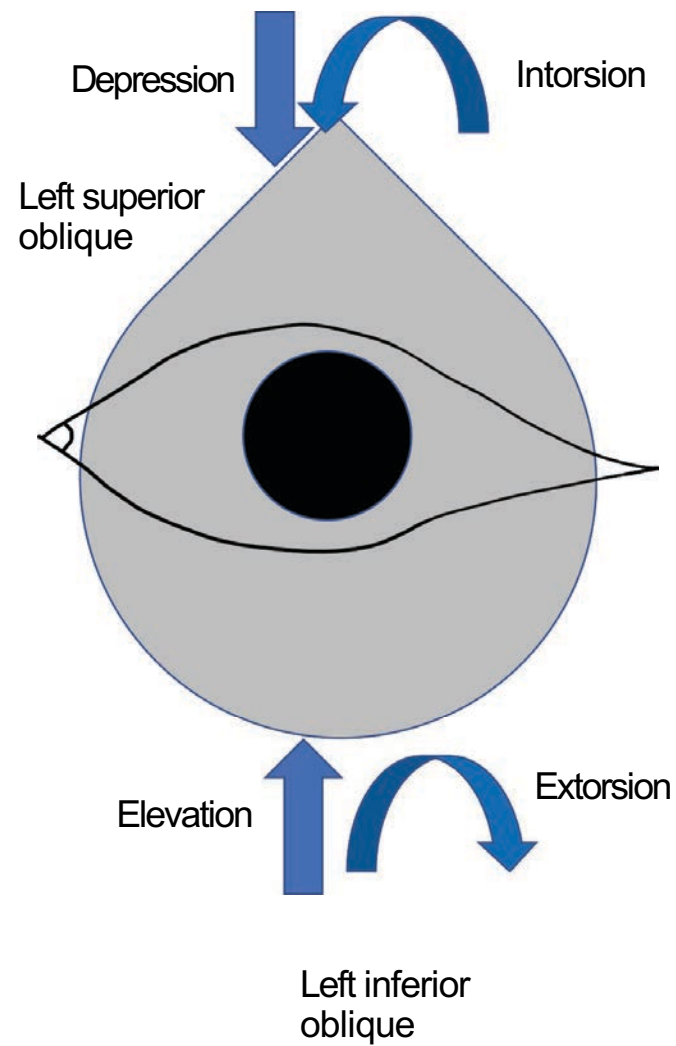
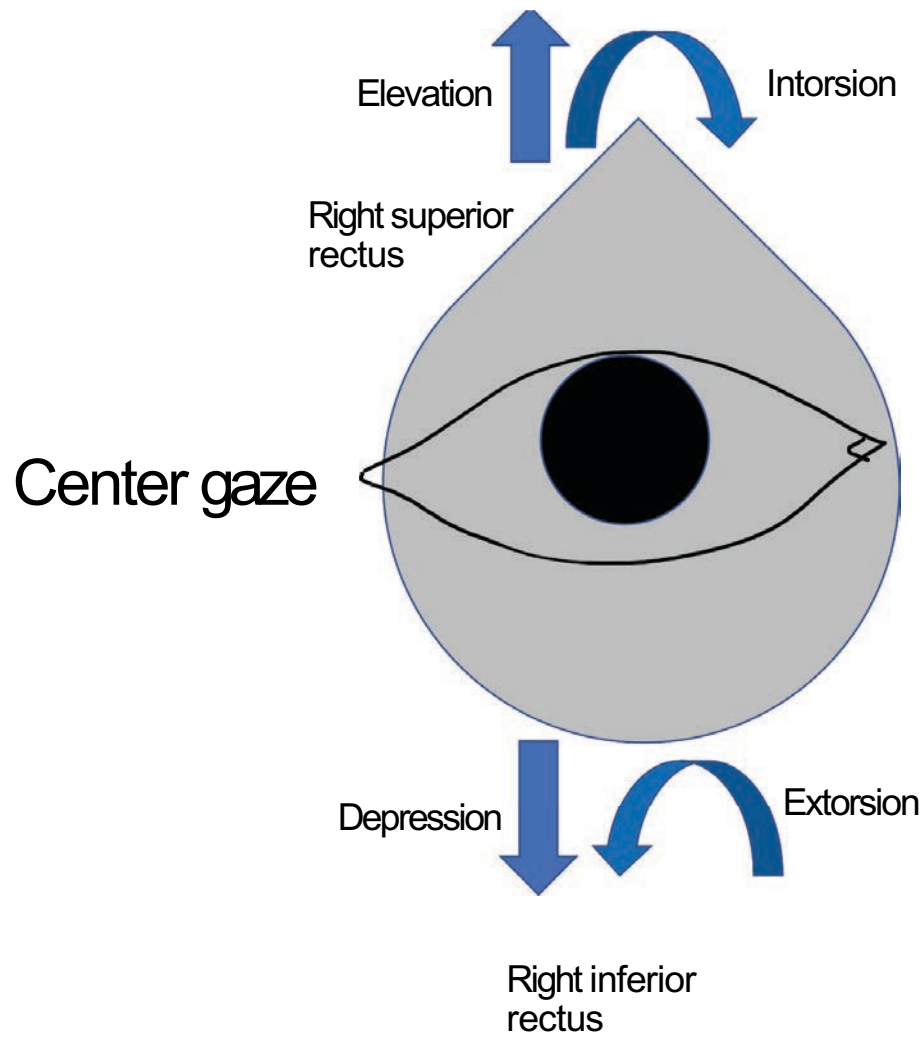




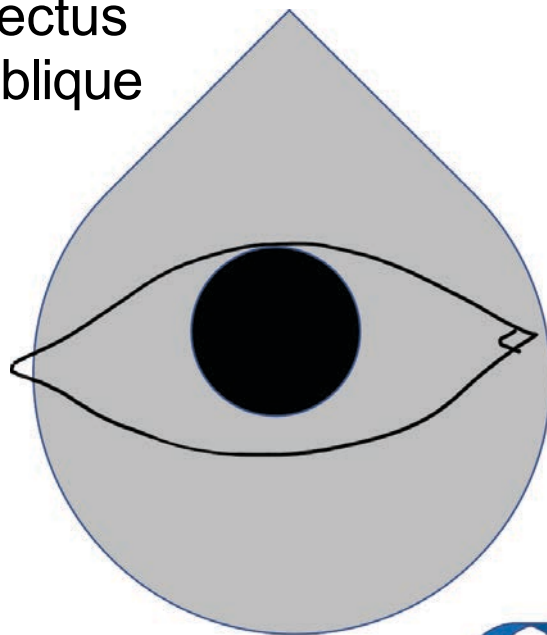








Action of
Right inferior rectus
Left superior oblique



Right inferior
rectus



Extorsion

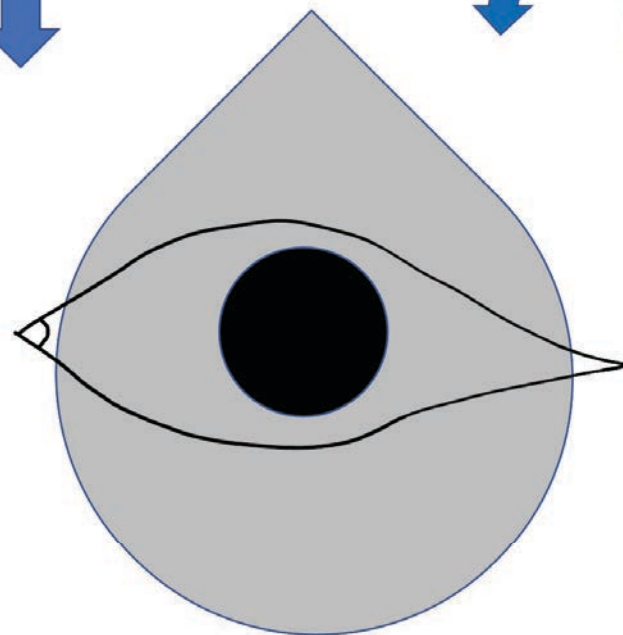


Depression

Left superior
oblique



Intorsion



Right gaze

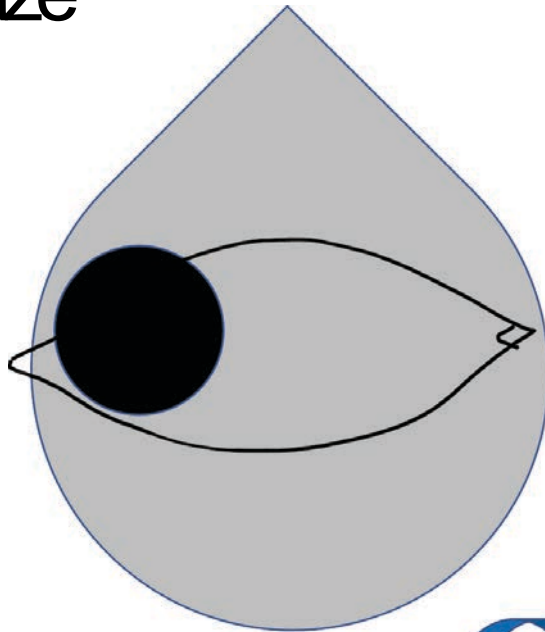


Depression

Right inferior
rectus



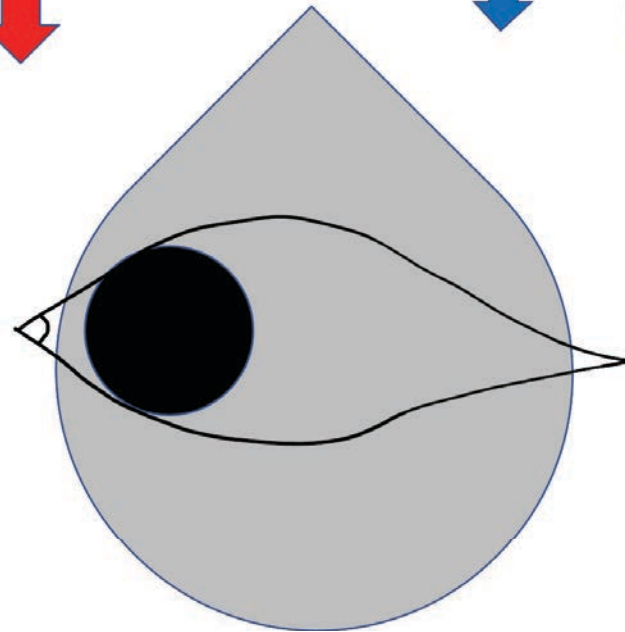
Extorsion



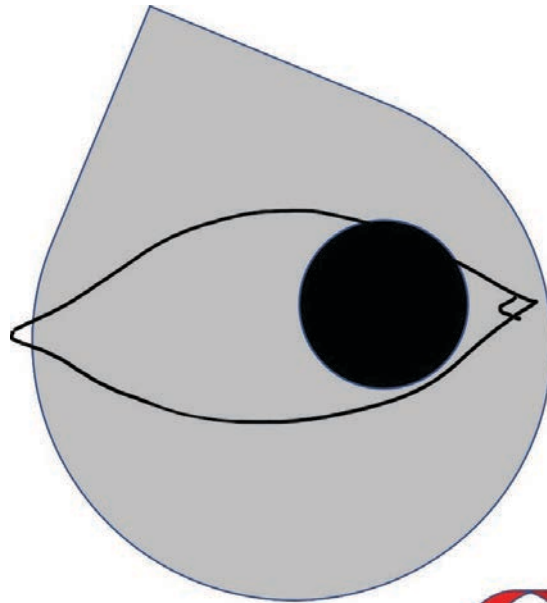
Depression
Left superior
oblique



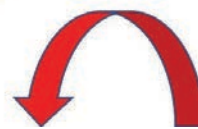
Intorsion



Left gaze



Right inferior
rectus



Extorsion

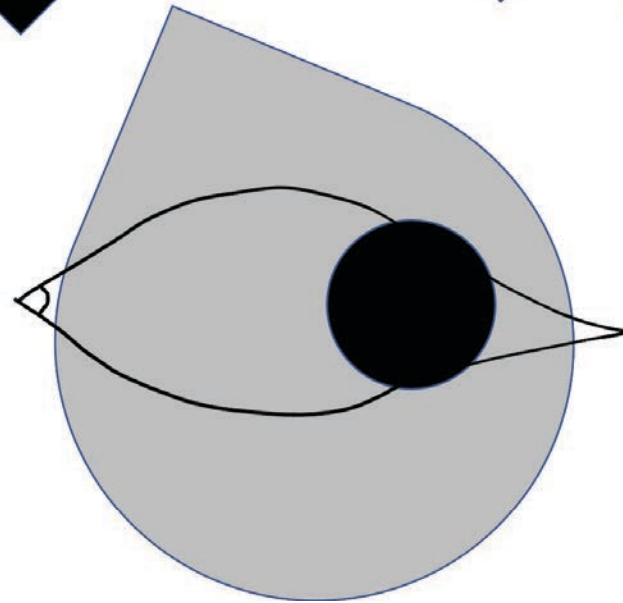


Depression

Left superior
oblique



Intorsion

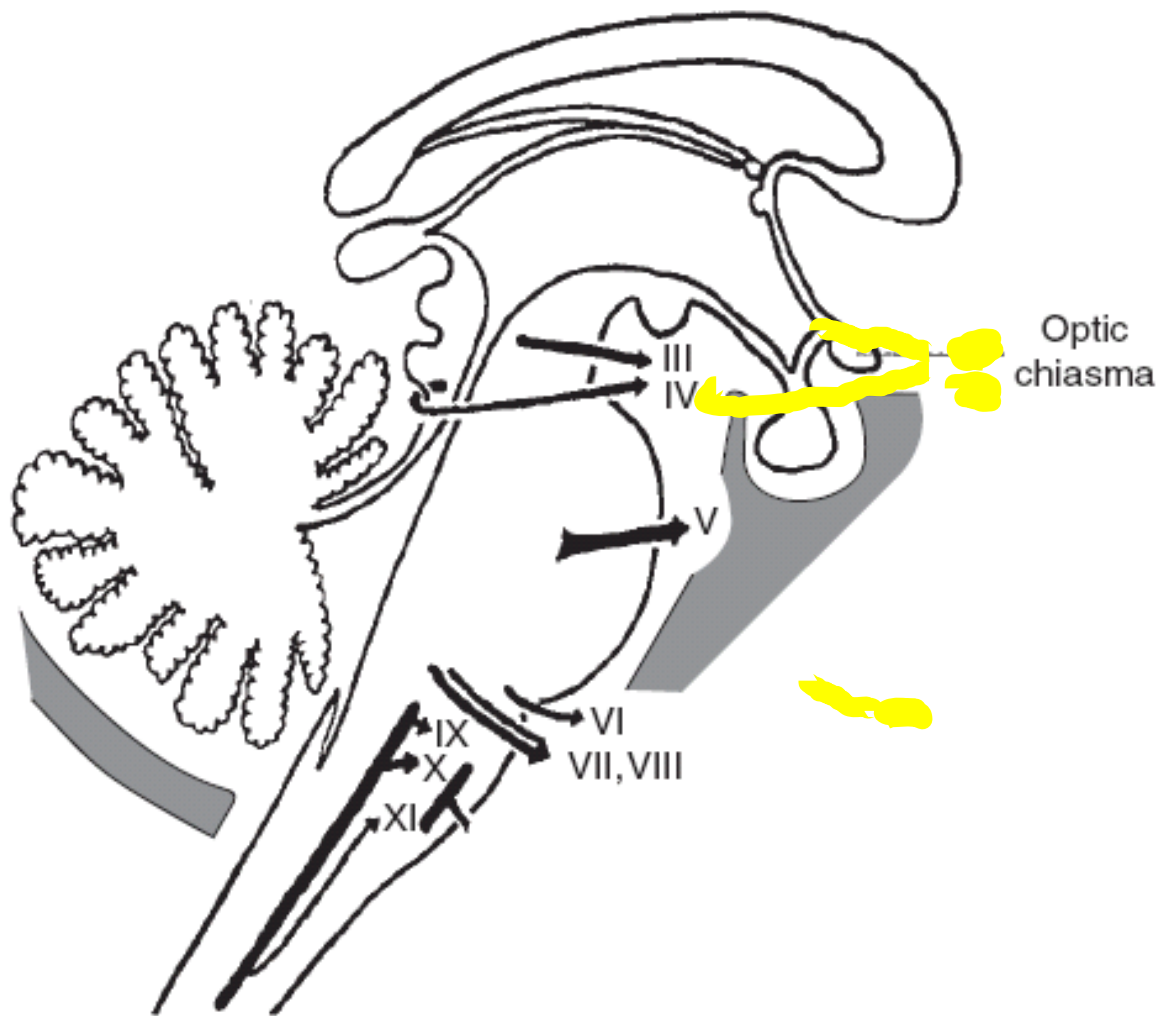


Actions of the extraocular muscles (see also Fig. 14-5)

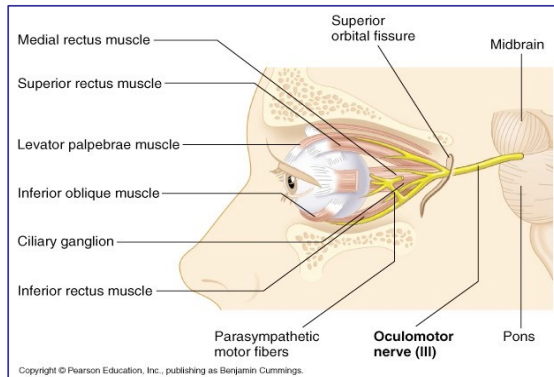
MUSCLE	PRIMARY ACTION	SECONDARY ACTION	OCULOMOTOR NERVE
Medial rectus	Adduction	—	III
Lateral rectus	Abduction	—	VI
Superior rectus	Elevation	Intorsion	III
Inferior rectus	Depression	Extorsion	III
Superior oblique	Intorsion	Depression	IV
Inferior oblique	Extorsion	Elevation	III

Anatomy of cranial nerves III IV VI

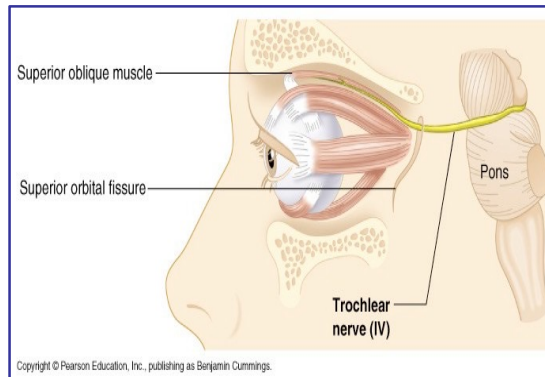
III IV VI nerves arise from brain stem nuclei & after emerging converge towards apex of orbit.



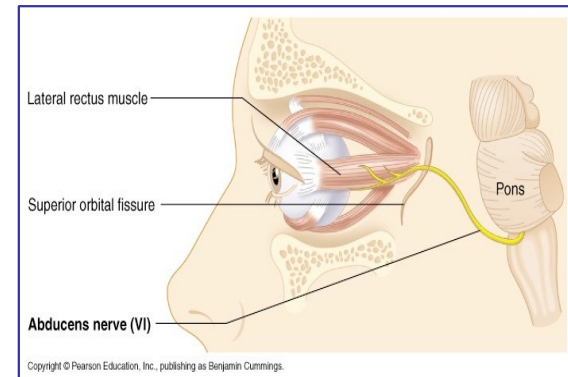
Ocular motor control



SO4



LR6



Innervation

III

- All extra-ocular muscles except LR6,SO4

IV

- Superior oblique

VI

- Lateral rectus

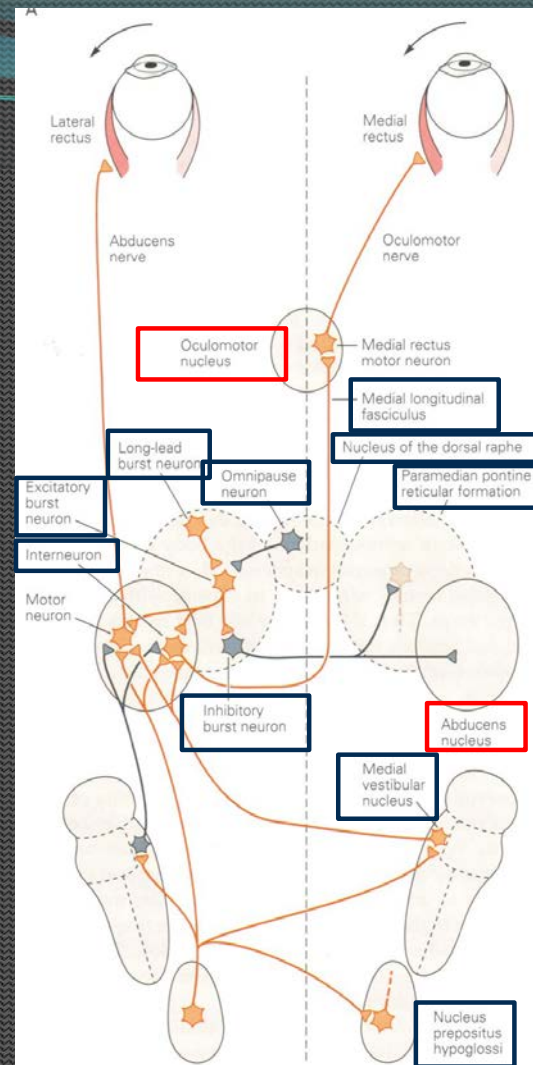
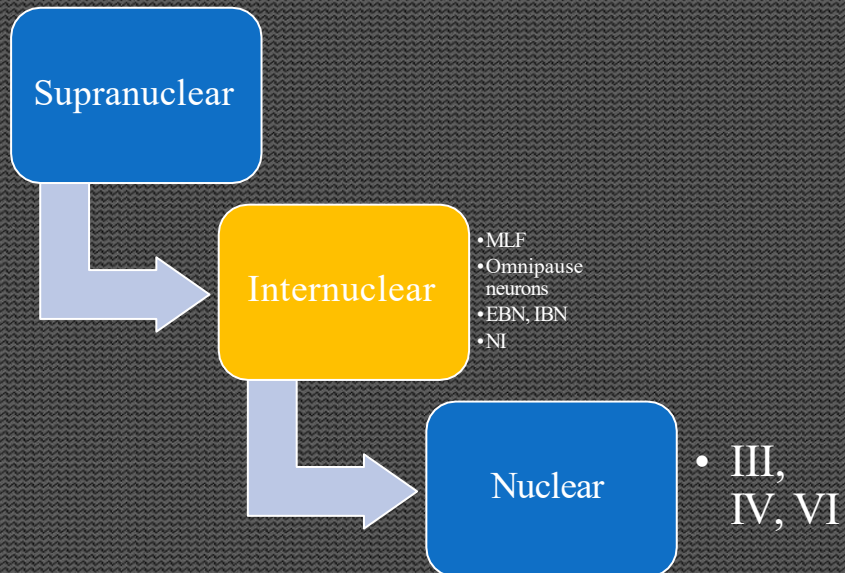


Oculomotor and ocular motor are not same

Oculomotor means third cranial nerve

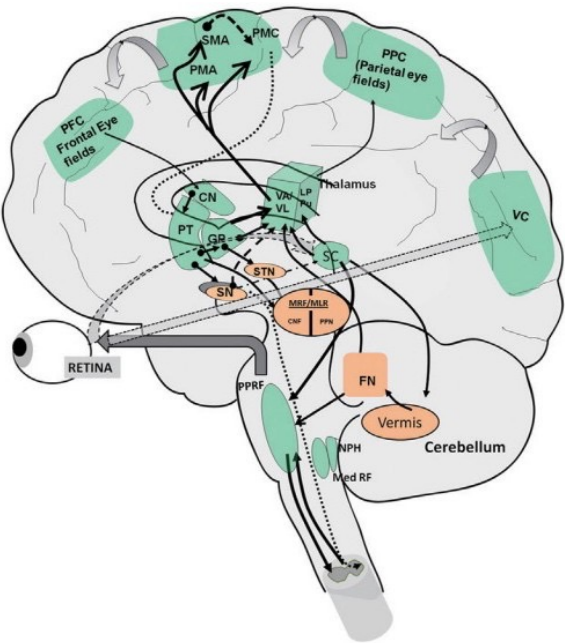
Ocular motor means III, IV, VI cranial nerves

Internuclear pathways

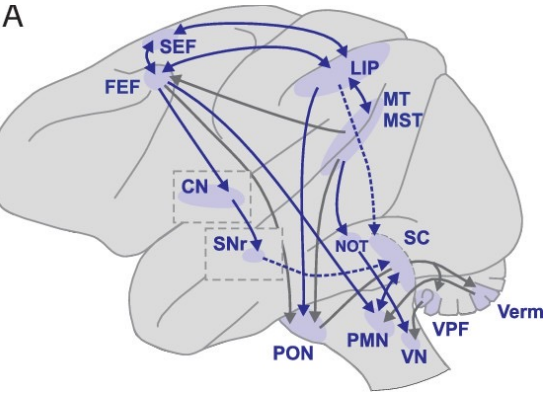


Supra-nuclear control

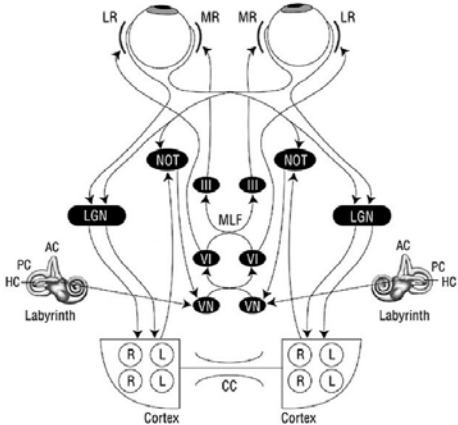
Saccade pathway



Smooth pursuit pathway



Optokinetic pathway



Purpose of eye movements

Hold images of the visual world steady on the retina during brief head rotations or translations (linear movements)

Hold the image of a stationary object on the fovea by minimizing ocular drifts

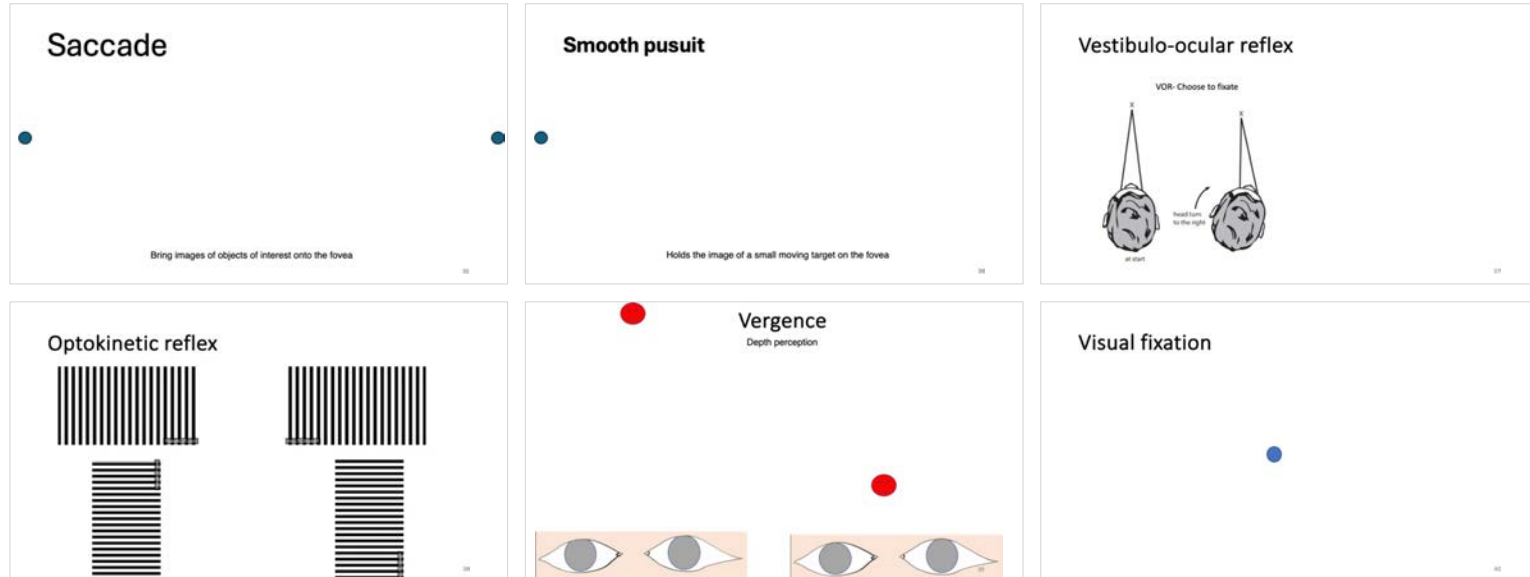
Hold images of the visual world steady on the retina during sustained head rotation or translations

Hold the image of a small moving target on the fovea; or holds the image of a small target on the retina that is close to the head, during linear motion (translation); with optokinetic responses, aids gaze stabilization during sustained head rotation

Bring images of objects of interest onto the fovea

Move the eyes in opposite directions so that images of a single object are placed or held simultaneously on the fovea of each eye

Functional classes of eye movements



Saccade



Bring images of objects of interest onto the fovea

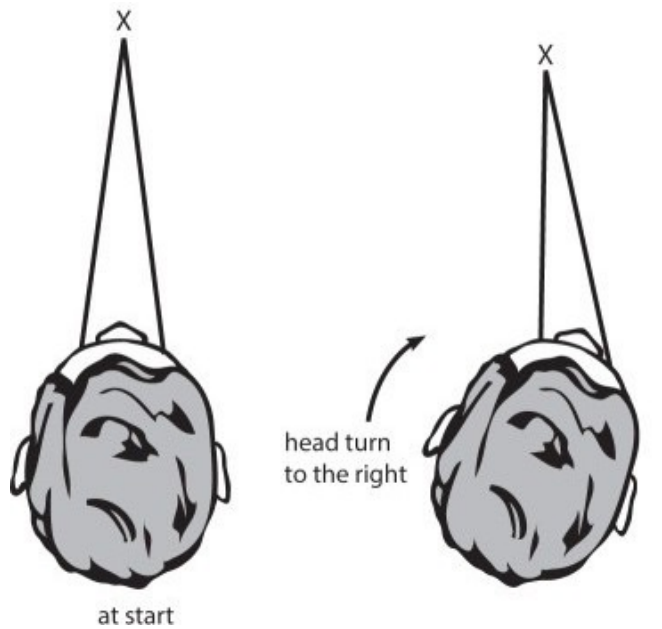
Smooth pursuit



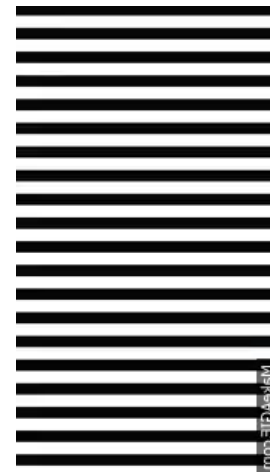
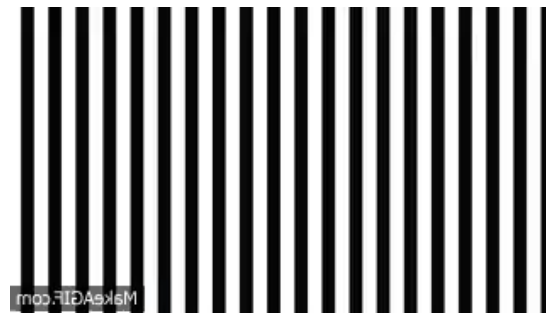
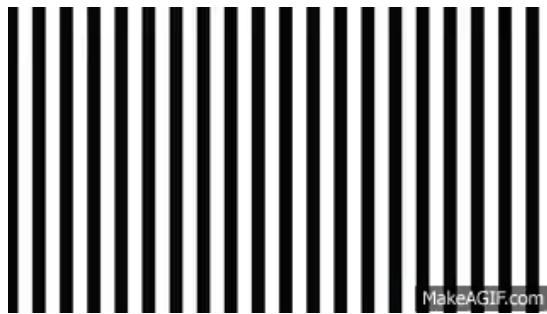
Holds the image of a small moving target on the fovea

Vestibulo-ocular reflex

VOR- Choose to fixate



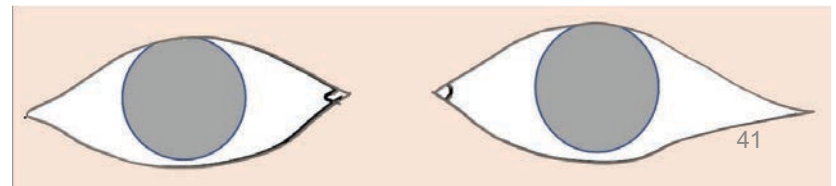
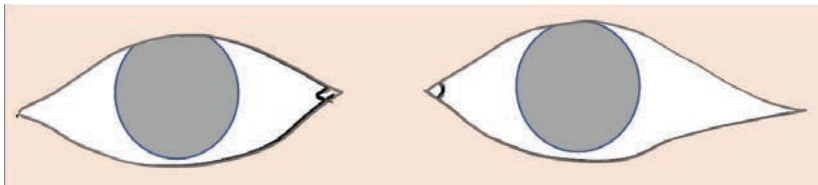
Optokinetic reflex





Vergence

Depth perception



Visual fixation



Functional classes of eye movements

Saccades

Bring images of objects of interest onto the fovea

Smooth pursuit

Holds the image of a small moving target on the fovea

VOR

Holds images of the visual world steady on the retina during brief head rotations or translations

OKR

Holds images of the visual world steady on the retina during sustained head rotation or translations

Vergence

Moves the eyes in opposite directions so that images of a single object are placed or held simultaneously on the fovea of each eye

Visual Fixation

Holds the image of a stationary object on the fovea by minimizing ocular drifts

Gaze-shifting

Saccades

Smooth
pursuit

Vergence

Gaze-stabilization

VOR

OKR

Visual
Fixation

Vestibular

Shorter latency (<15 ms)
Fatigable

VOR

Visual

Longer latency (>70 ms)
No fatigue

Saccades

Smooth
pursuit

OKR

Vergence

Visual
Fixation

Conjugate

Dys-conjugate

Saccades

Smooth
pursuit

VOR

OKR

Visual
Fixation

Vergence

Foveal

Retinal

Saccades

Smooth
pursuit

VOR

OKR

Vergence

Visual
Fixation

Can inhibit

Saccades

Smooth
pursuit

VOR

Vergence

Visual
Fixation

OKR

Voluntary

Involuntary saccades – Fast phase of all nystagmus

Saccades

Yes

Smooth
pursuit

Yes

VOR

OKR

Vergence

Yes

Visual
Fixation

Visual
Fixation

Reflexive

Yes

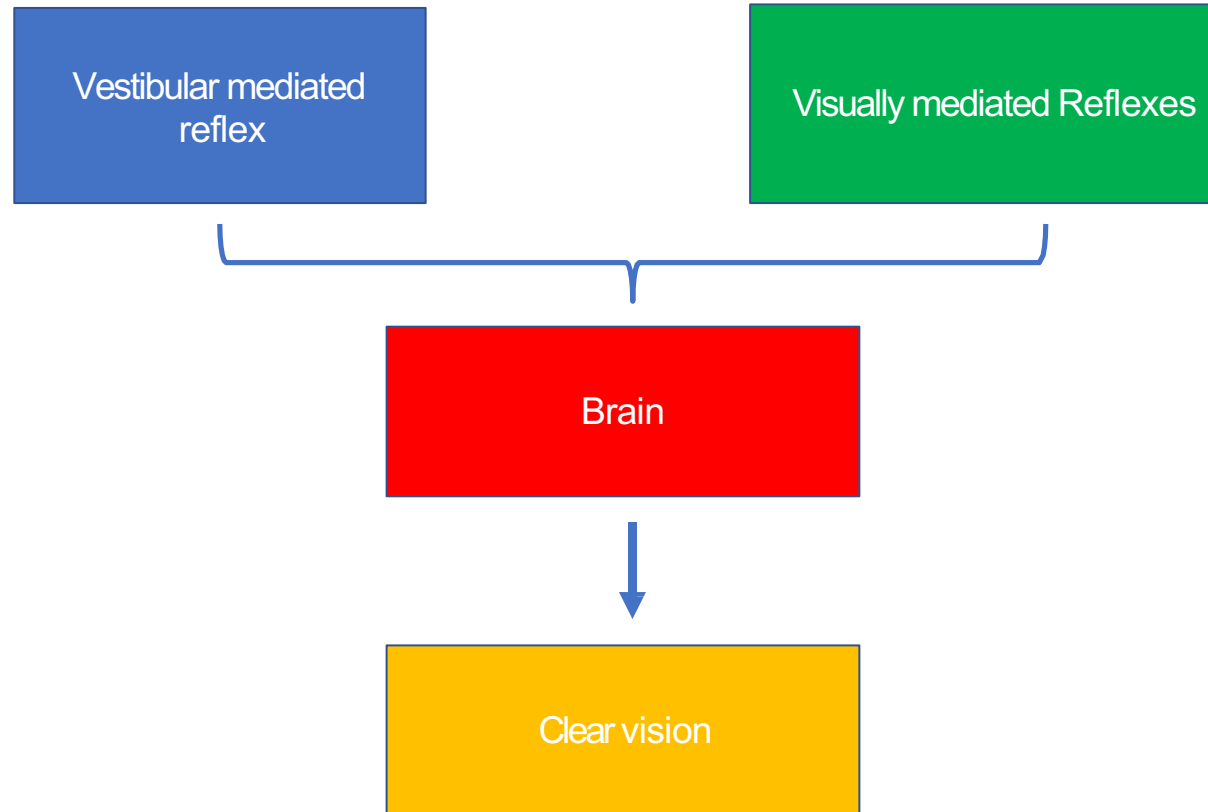
Largely

Yes

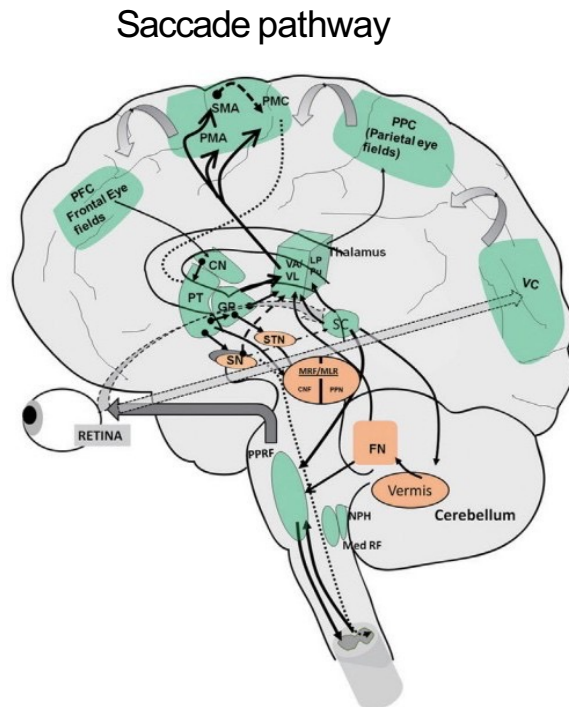
Yes

Largely

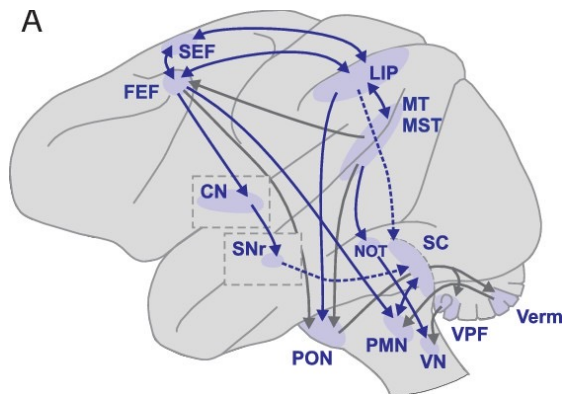
Quick phase of
OKN, VOR
Reflex visual,
Reflex auditory



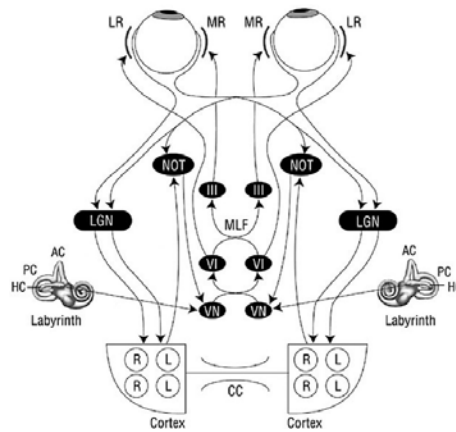
Why to study eye movements?



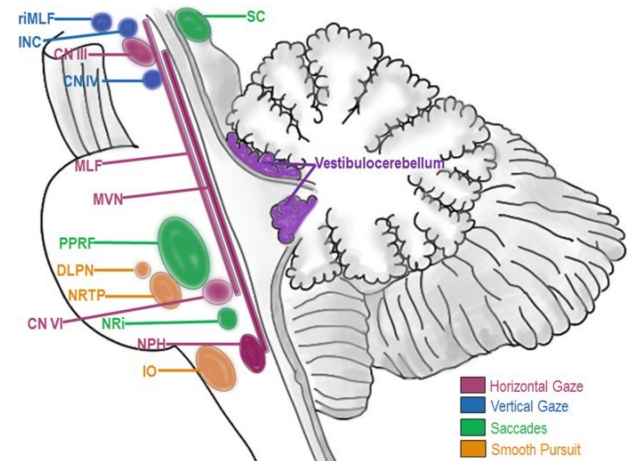
Smooth pursuit pathway



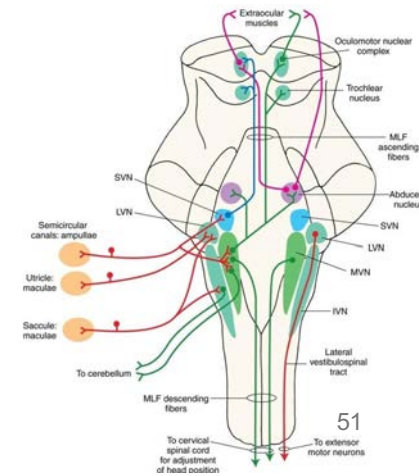
Optokinetic pathway



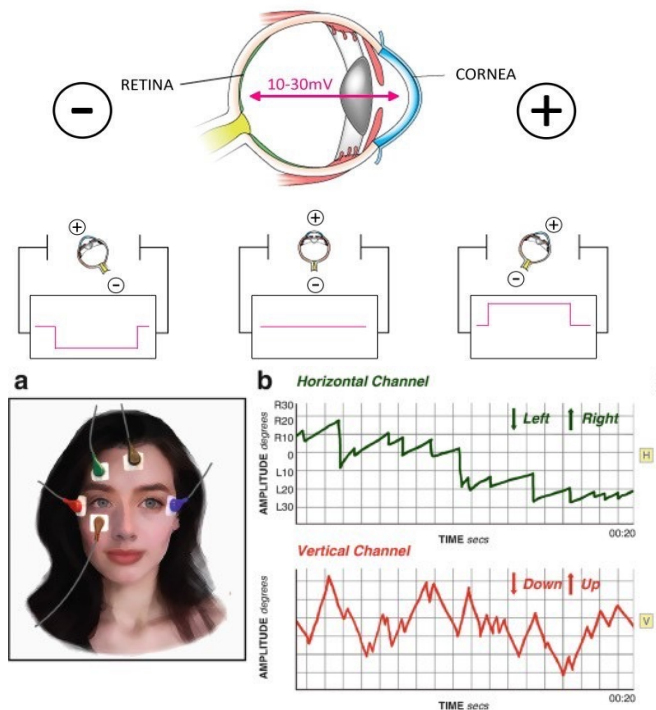
Brainstem control



Vestibulo-ocular reflex

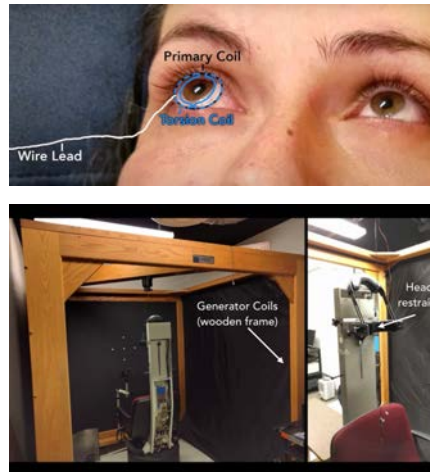


Electro-nystagmography



Clinical methods

Scleral search coil



Video-nystagmography



Video-Oculography

Video-recording
Eye movement graphs

Practical and easy ⁵⁰

Comparison of Eye Movement Recording Techniques



Feature	Electro-nystagmography (ENG)	Video-nystagmography (VNG)	Scleral Search Coil (SSC)
Method	Measures electrical potential generated by eye movement	Tracks eye movement with a video camera	Tracks eye movement with a magnetic field and coil placed on the sclera
Accuracy	Moderate	High	Highest
Portability	High	Moderate	Low
Cost	Moderate	Moderate	High
Data captured	Primarily horizontal and vertical eye movements	Horizontal, vertical, and torsional eye movements	All eye movements (horizontal, vertical, torsional, and 3D rotations)
Limitations	Susceptible to electrical interference, requires skin contact with electrodes	Limited by camera resolution and field of view, requires good head stabilization	Requires specialized equipment and expertise, invasive procedure (placing coil)
Applications	Assessing vestibular function, diagnosing nystagmus, monitoring for neurological conditions	Similar to ENG, plus evaluation of gaze instability and smooth pursuit	Research on eye movement control, studying vestibular function in detail

Nick name for Video-
oculography is
Video-nystagmography

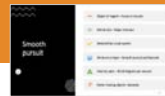


Protocol in VNG

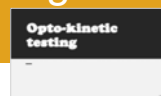
Saccades



Smooth pursuit



Optokinetic testing



Centre gaze testing in light

Gaze testing in light

Testing without fixation

Head shaking nystagmus

Positional testing

Hyperventilation nystagmus

VOR suppression testing

Caloric testing

Rotary chair

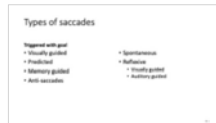
Saccadic system



PURPOSE



TYPES



PATHWAYS



ROLE OF ATTENTION



HOW TO TEST



MECHANICAL PROPERTIES



LESIONS



Purpose

-
- To place on the fovea objects of interest, which often have first been registered by the peripheral retina

Saccadic eye movements are also used to inspect a complex scene, such as a painting.



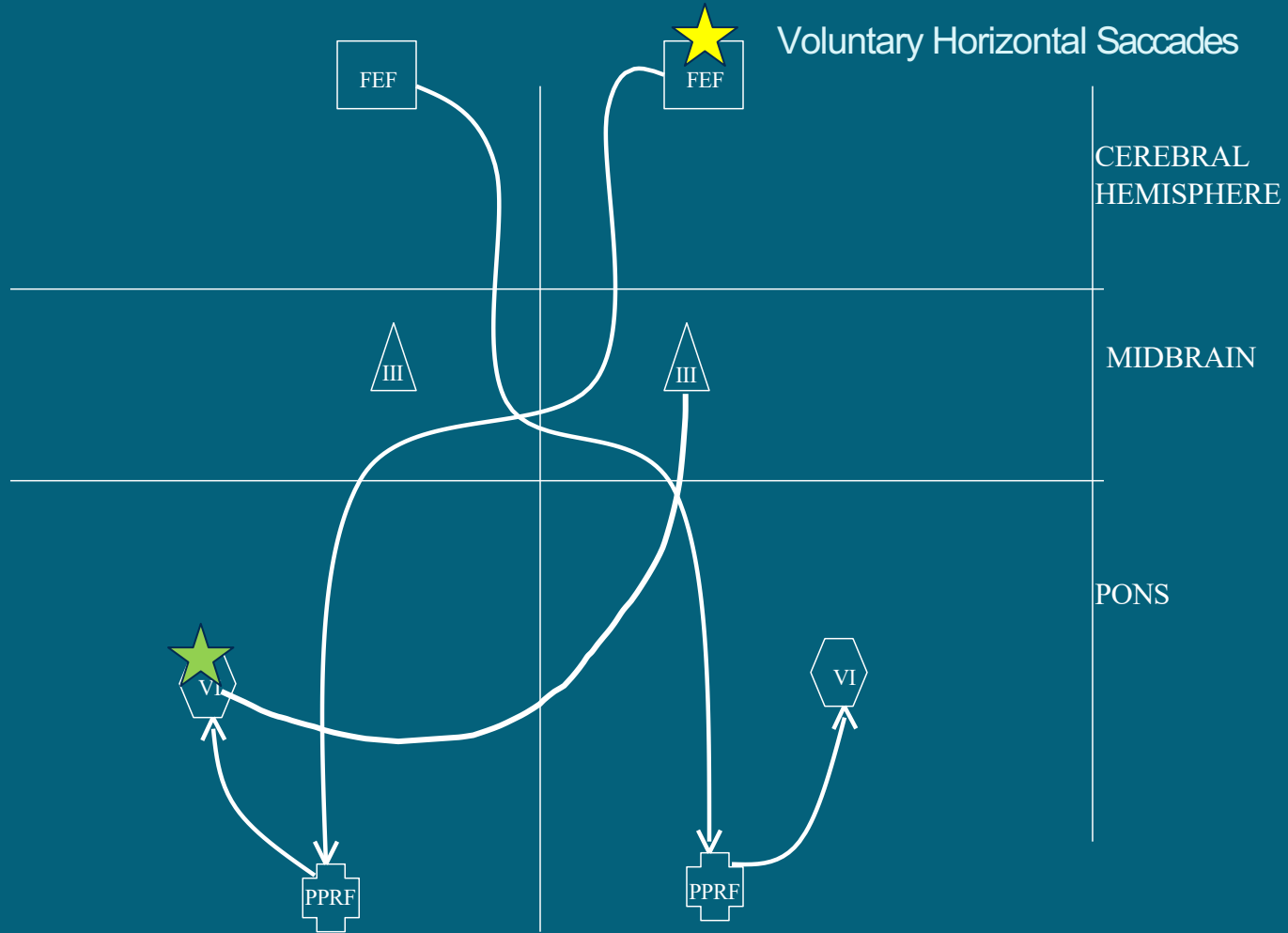
Types of saccades

Triggered with goal

- Visually guided
- Predicted
- Memory guided
- Anti-saccades

- Spontaneous
- Reflexive
 - Visually guided
 - Auditory guided

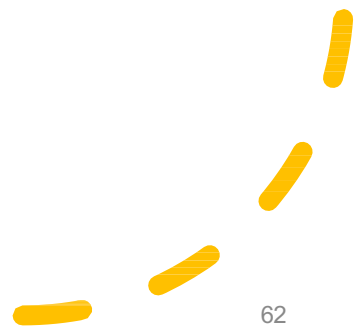
Voluntary Horizontal Saccades



A large orange semi-circle graphic on the left side of the slide.

Saccade control

- Right FEF – Left saccade
- Left FEF – Right saccade
- Both FEF/ SC- Vertical saccade





Attention

- Key to cognitive function

Pre-requisite for
VNG test



Mechanical properties of Saccades



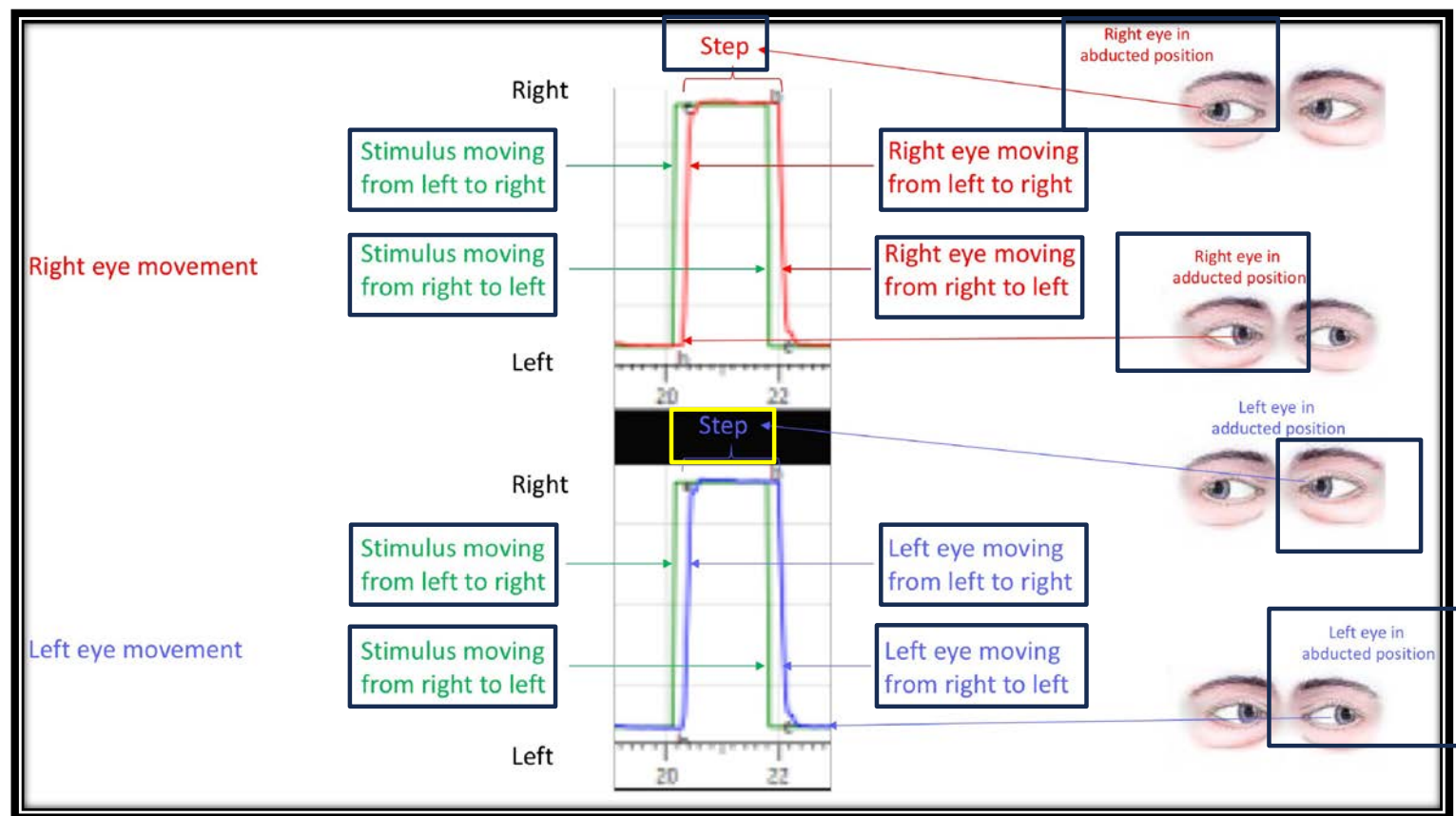
Brain makes use of sensory map of the visual environment and the coordinates of the orbit



Desired position and Actual position



Calculate the pulse and step



**Pulse or Phasic discharge
or Velocity command**

Right LR

Pulse for abduction of right eye

Pulse for adduction of right eye

Pulse for right gaze

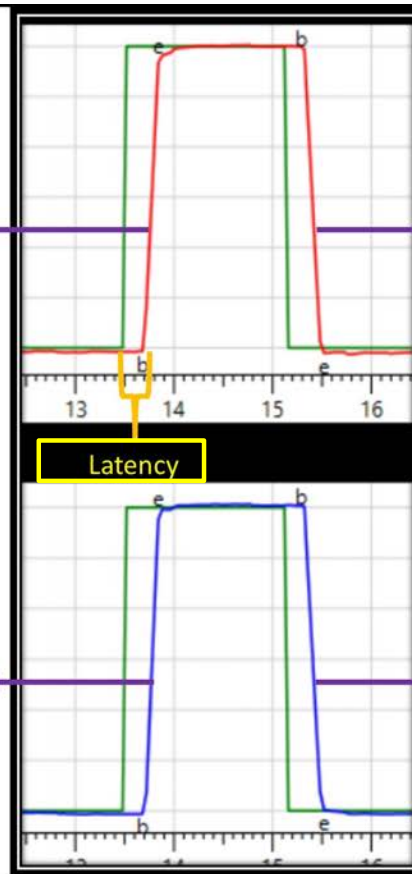
Pulse for left gaze

Left MR

Pulse for adduction of left eye

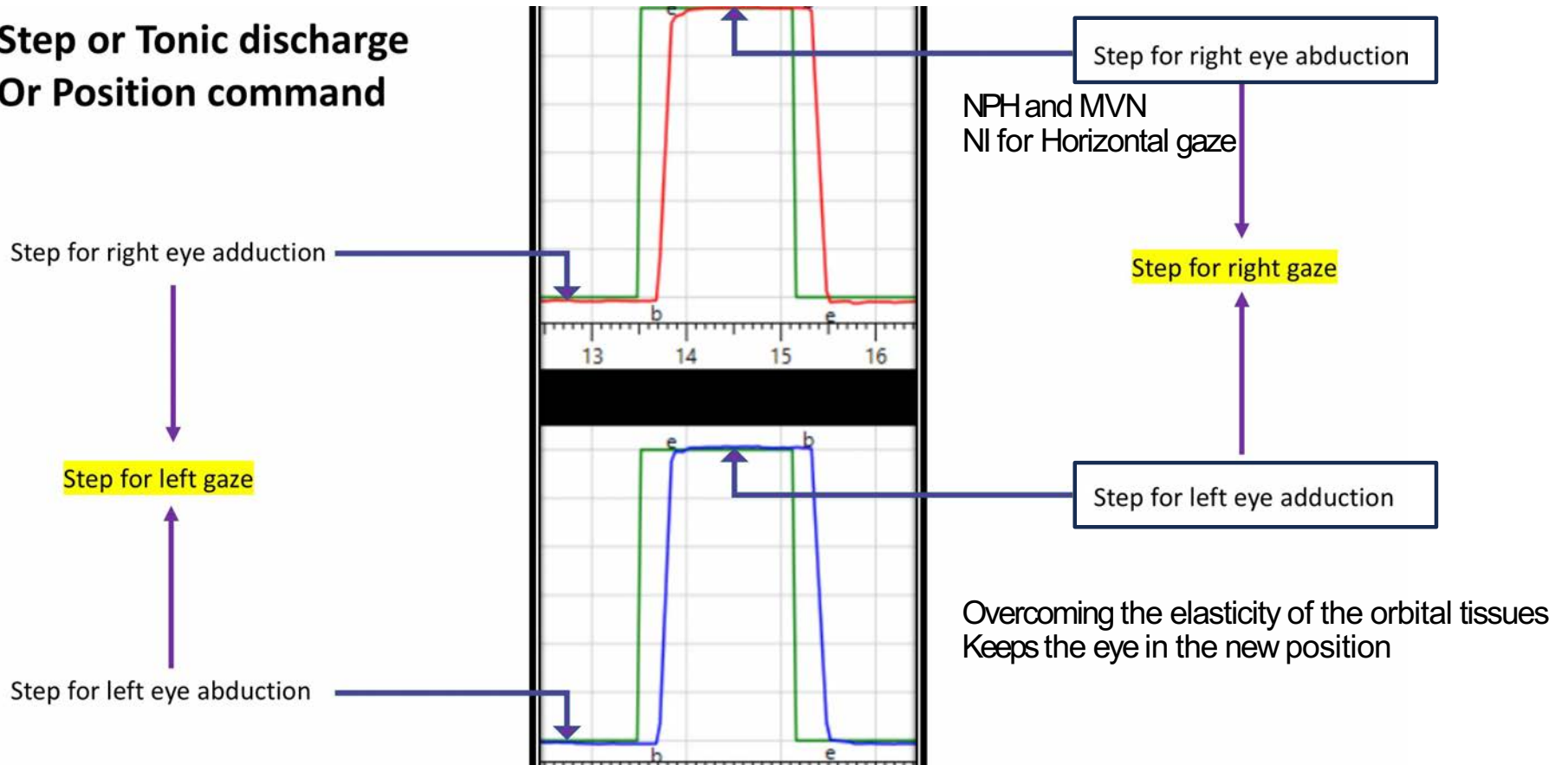
Pulse for abduction of left eye

Overcomes the resistance of orbital tissues
And inertia of the globe

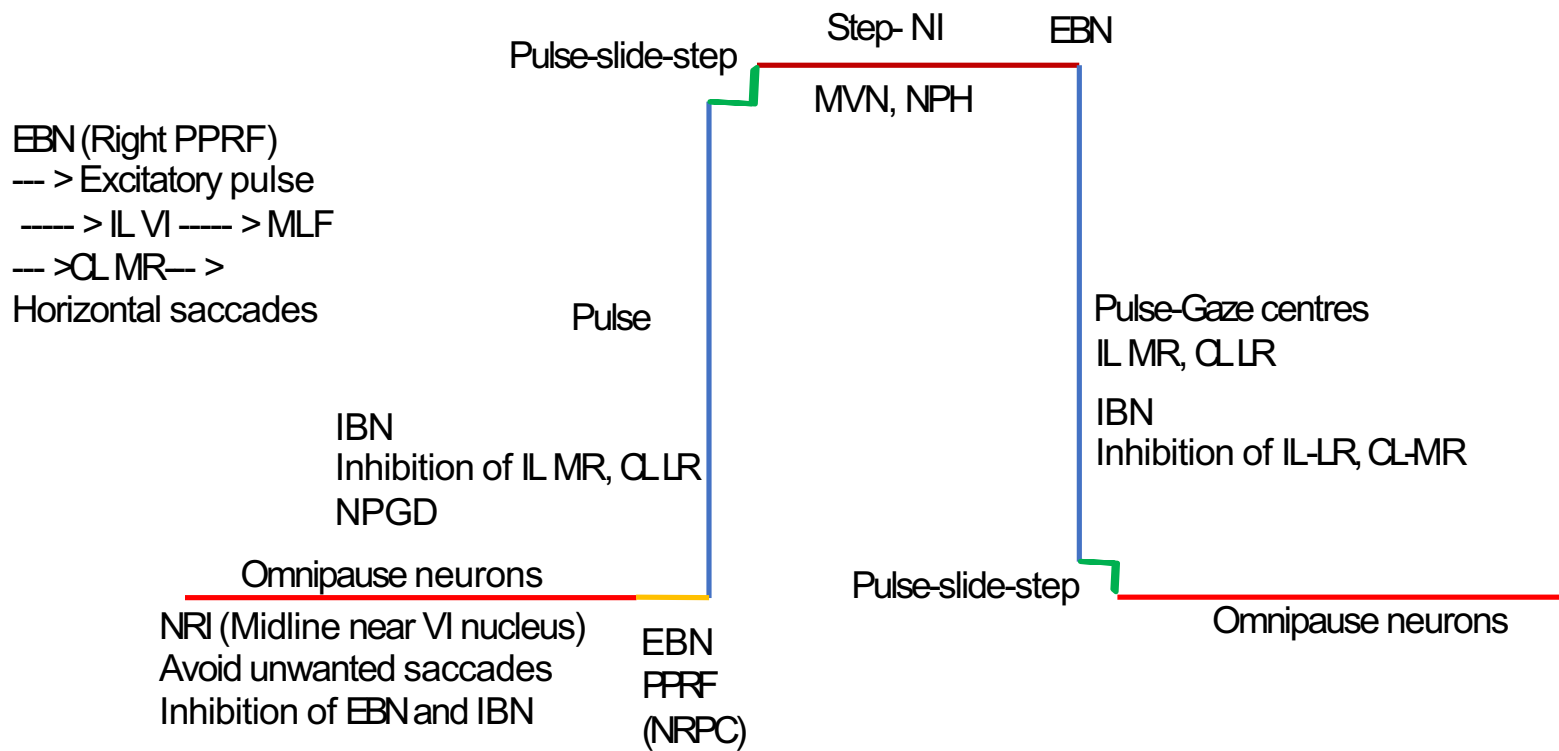


Pulse-slide-step The transition between the end of the pulse and the beginning of the step is actually not abrupt but gradual

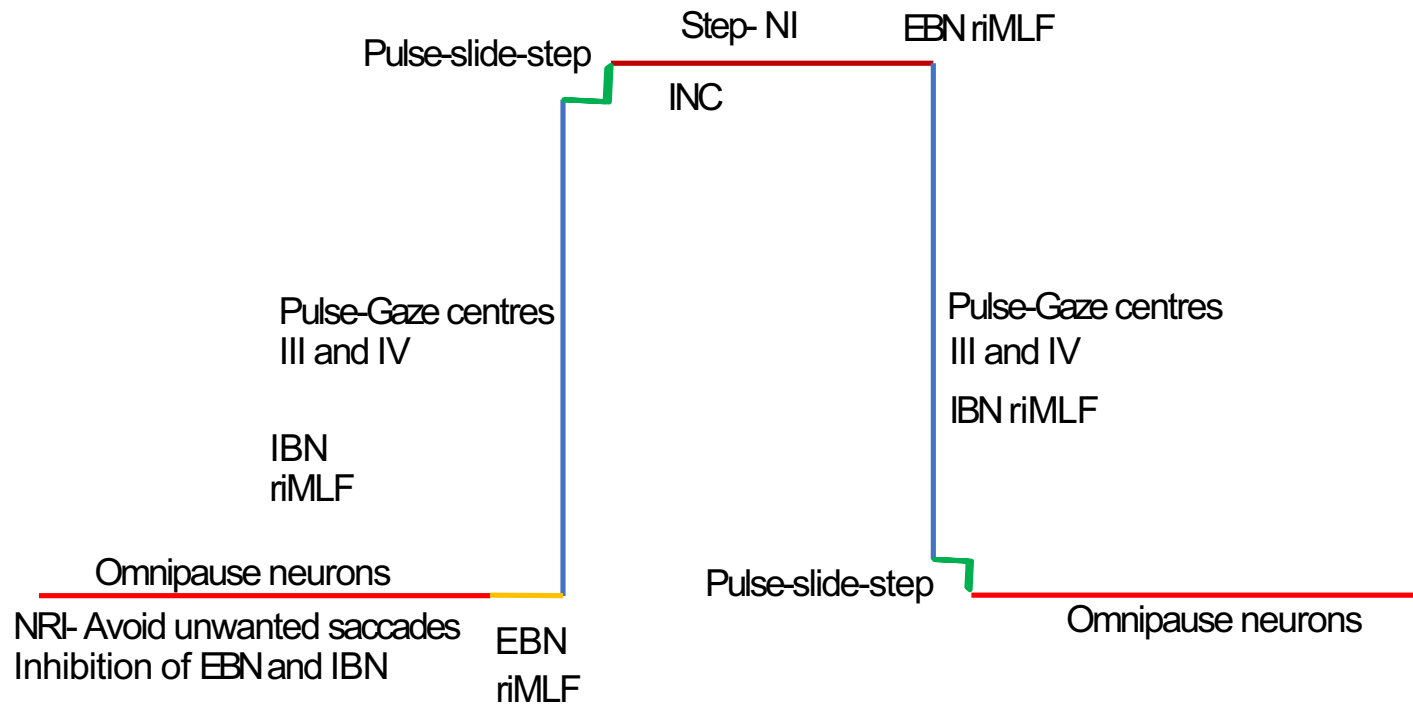
Step or Tonic discharge Or Position command



Horizontal saccades



Vertical saccades



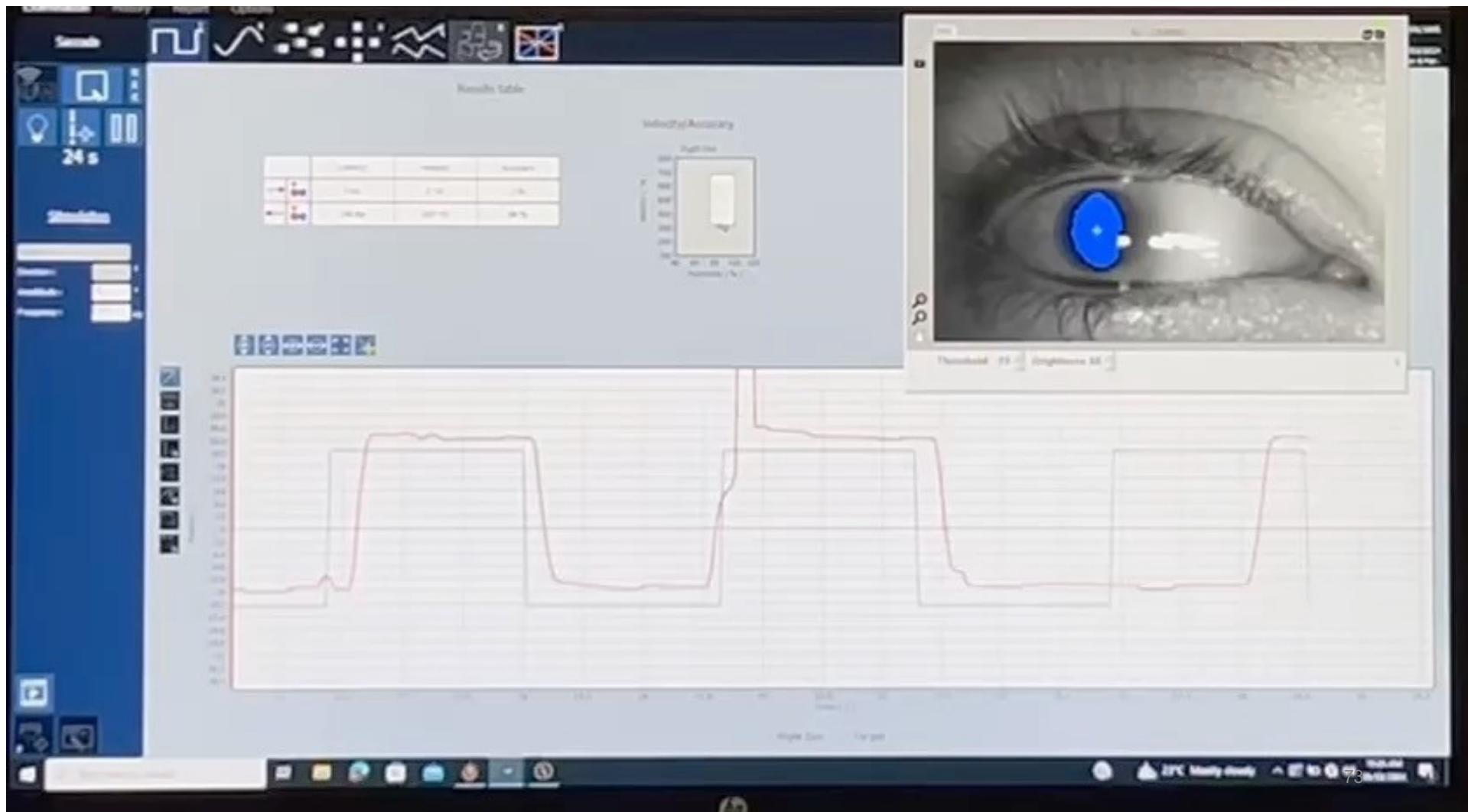
	Horizontal (Caudal pons)	Vertical and torsional (Rostral mesencephalon)	Function	Clinical signs
				Ocular flutter Opsoclonus ⁷¹ Slow saccades (SCA3)

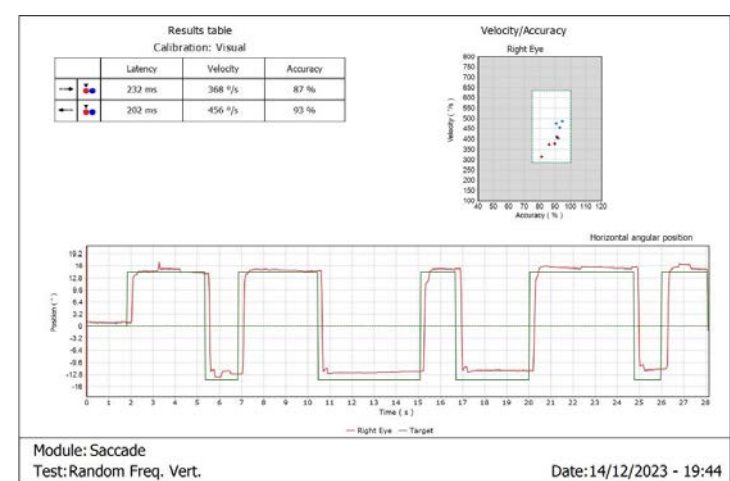
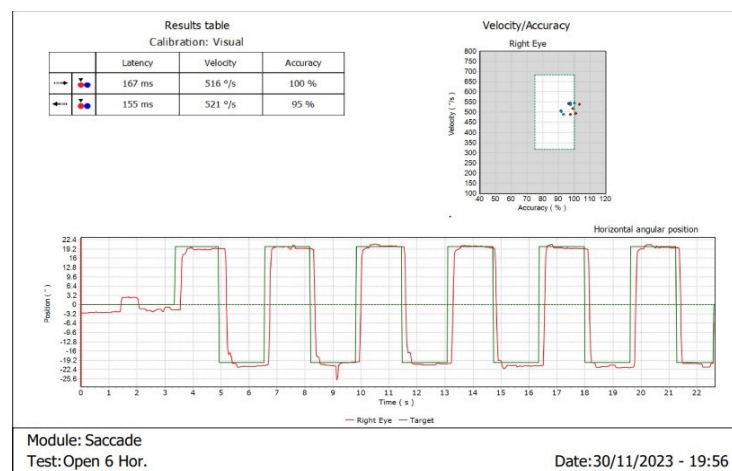
Cerebrum

- Decides when & where to move

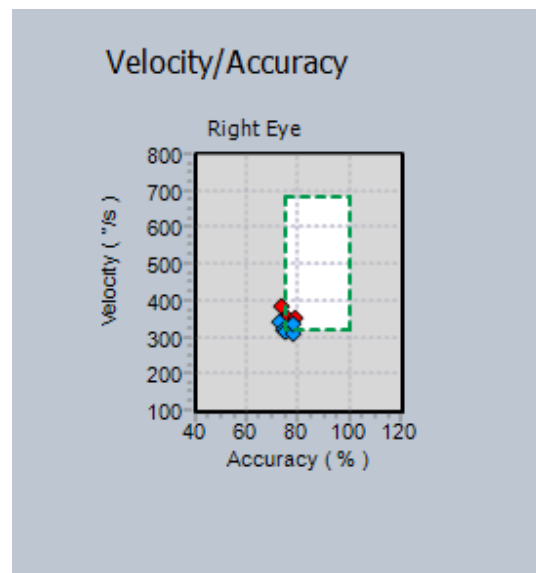
Brainstem

- Determines how to move the eye





Velocity :-300 to 700° / Sec
 Precision-80 to 100
 Latency-<200 ms



	Latency	Velocity	Accuracy
	180 ms	344 °/s	76 %
	170 ms	322 °/s	76 %



Abnormal saccades

Precision

Latency

Velocity (Too
fast or too
slow)

Trajectory

Conjugacy

Saccade Parameter	Clinical Significance	Causes of Abnormalities	Pathogenesis
Latency	Increased latency may indicate dysfunction in cortical or subcortical areas responsible for initiating saccades .	Neurodegenerative diseases (e.g., Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease), cognitive slowing, frontal eye field or basal ganglia lesions.	Delayed initiation of saccades due to impaired transmission of neural signals from cortical areas or basal ganglia involved in the planning and execution of eye movements.
Precision	Imprecision (dysmetria) suggests issues with the cerebellum or its pathways , affecting the ability to accurately target visual objects.	Cerebellar ataxia, multiple sclerosis, brainstem lesions affecting the ocular motor system.	Disruption in the cerebellar control of eye movements leads to overshooting or undershooting of the target , reflecting the cerebellum's role in fine-tuning and error correction of motor actions.
Velocity	Decreased velocity can indicate brainstem or ocular motor nerve dysfunction . Consistently high velocity may not be as common but could suggest compensation mechanisms.	Myasthenia gravis, oculomotor nerve palsy, brainstem stroke, peripheral neuropathies.	Impaired neural signal transmission or muscle weakness affecting the rapid muscle contractions required for swift eye movements. In cases of brainstem lesions, disruption of the paramedian pontine reticular formation or pathways can affect saccadic speed.

Slower saccades

Elderly

Drowsy

Inattentive

Medicated



Cortical lesions

FEF	PEF	Unilateral parietal lesions	BL Parietal lesions	BL FP lesions	FEF and SC
• Involves Non-visual guided intensional saccades • Spares visually guided intensional saccades	• Visually guided saccades • Spares non-visual saccades	• Increased saccade latencies • Hypometric contralateral saccades • Saccadic slowing	• Acquired ocular motor apraxia • Visual > Voluntary	• Both Visual and Voluntary	• Saccade to CL side

Smooth pursuit



Object of regard – Fovea or macula



Retinal slip – Major stimulus



Detected by visual system



OK drum or tape – Smooth pursuit and Saccade



Velocity upto – 30-40 degrees per second



Faster moving objects- Saccades

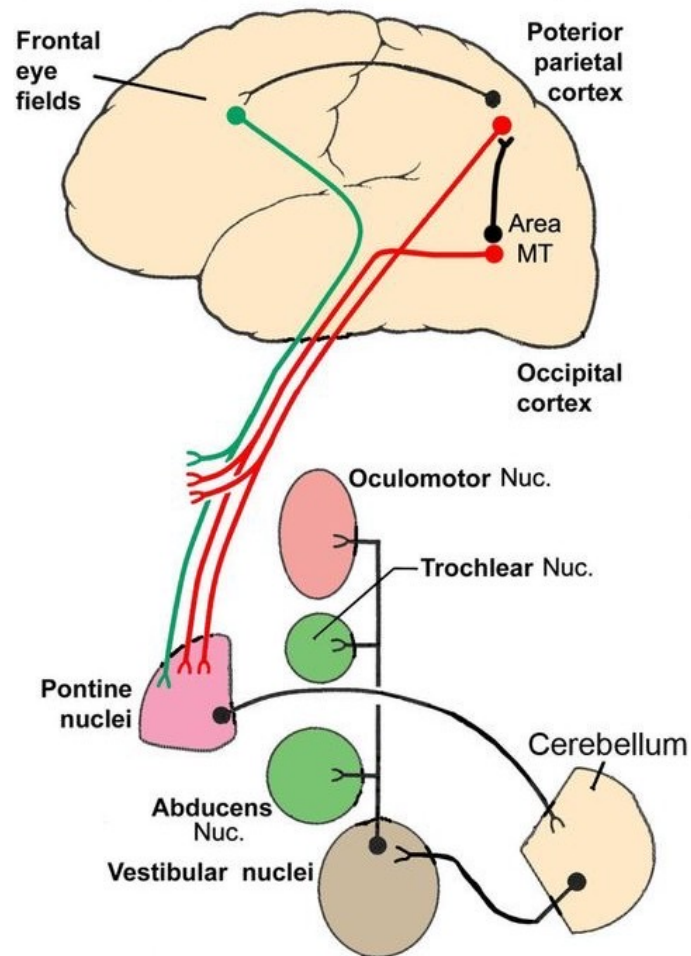


- Excess head motion or Excess object motion

Retinal slip- The image moves off the fovea of the retina, resulting in visual blurring

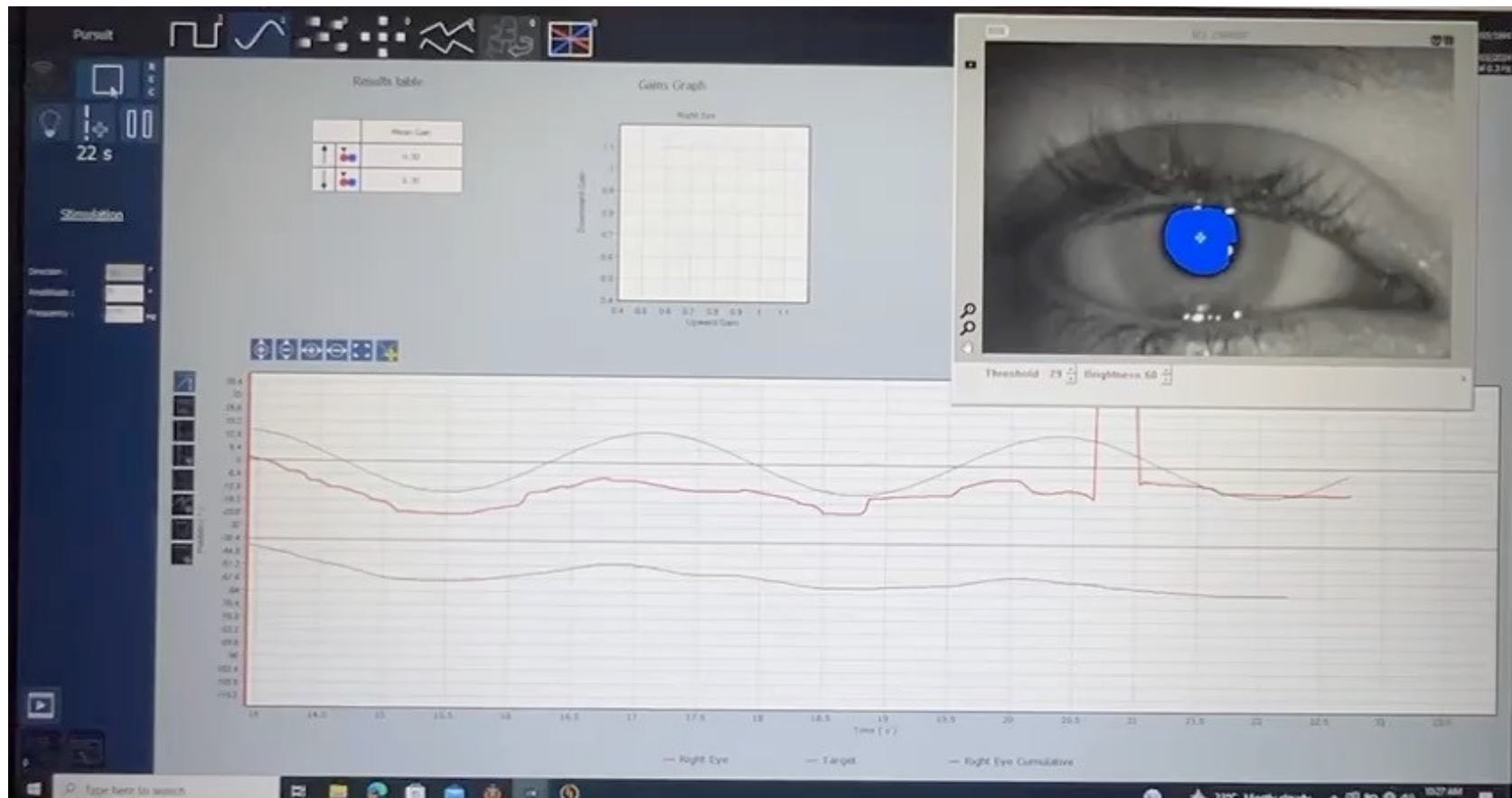
Control of Smooth Pursuit Eye Movements

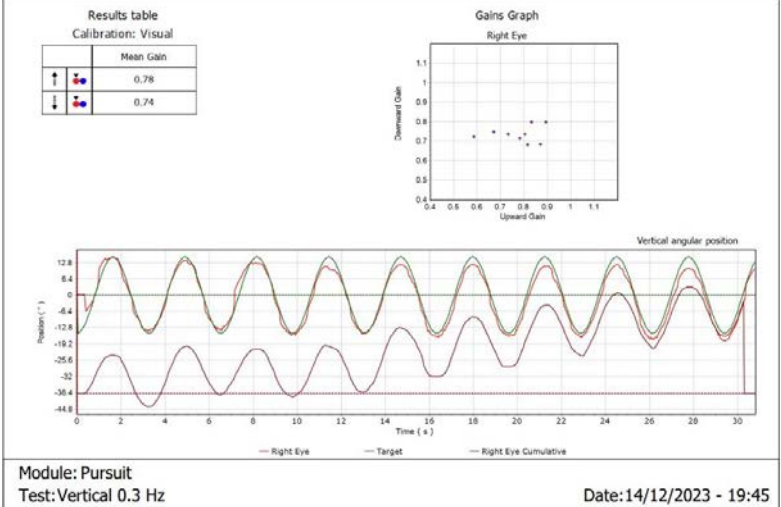
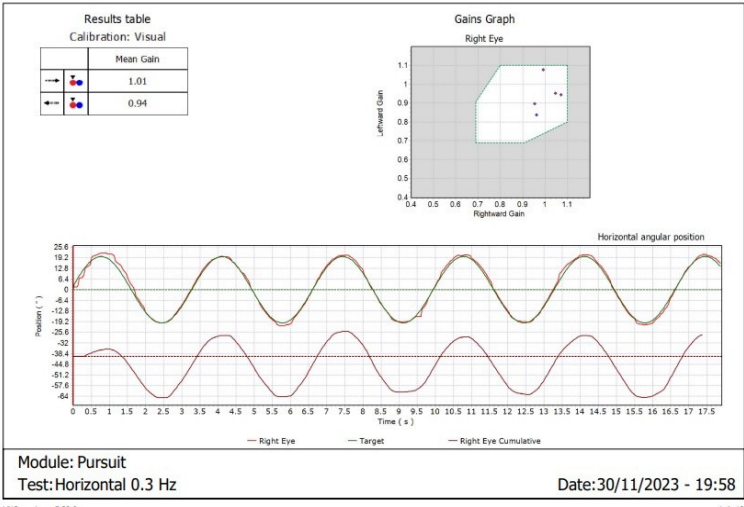
video

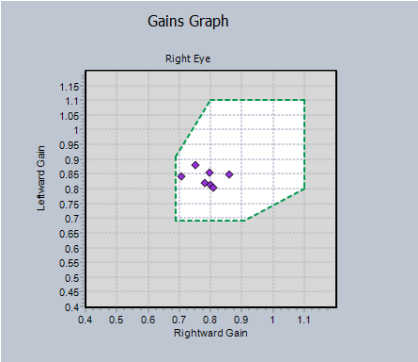








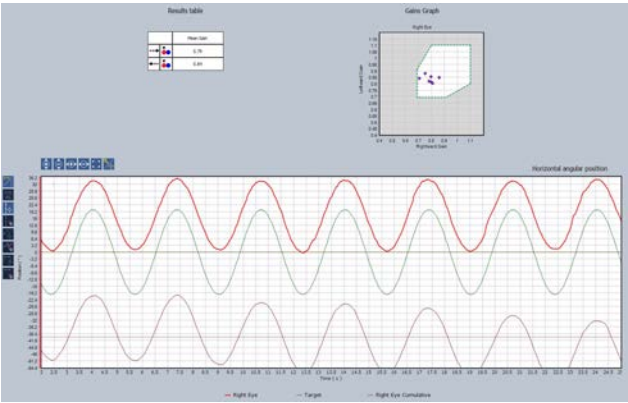




Results table

	Mean Gain
	0.79
	0.84

Normal Mean gain:-0.8 to 1.1



Abnormality	Pathogenesis	Potential Causes
Saccadic Intrusions	Disruption in the smooth control of eye movements, leading to unintended saccades.	Central nervous system disorders, lesions in the brain areas controlling eye movements.
Reduced Gain	The eyes move slower than the target, indicating inefficiency in processing visual motion or ocular motor dysfunction.	Vestibular dysfunction, cerebellar disorders, brainstem lesions, visual processing disorders.
Asymmetry in Pursuit	Unequal ability to pursue targets in different directions, indicating unilateral impairment.	Unilateral vestibular loss, lesions in one hemisphere affecting ocular motor control, unilateral cerebellar dysfunction.
Catching-Up Saccades	Corrective saccades made when the eyes fall behind the moving target, indicating a delay in eye movement initiation or speed.	Cerebellar disorders, brainstem dysfunction, vestibular system disorders.
Back-Up Saccades	Corrective saccades made when the eyes overshoot the target, similar to catching-up saccades but in the opposite direction.	Less common, but can be associated with dysfunction in the cerebellum or brainstem.
Gaze-Evoked Nystagmus during Pursuit	Induction of nystagmus when attempting to maintain gaze on a moving target, indicating abnormal vestibular or ocular motor response.	Vestibular disorders, central nervous system lesions, medication effects, cerebellar dysfunction.
Pursuit Intermittency	Interruption of smooth pursuit by phases of fixation or loss of tracking, indicating issues with maintaining continuous visual tracking.	Neurodegenerative diseases, attentional disorders, lesions affecting visual motion processing areas.

Impaired SP

Impaired VOR suppression

Hemispherotomy

Lesions in SP pathway

Supra-tentorial

- Frontal lesions- Predictable IL SP
- Dorsomedial Frontal cortex
- Bilateral Occipital lesions- Abolish SP
- Parietal lesions- Reduce the amplitude and velocity of IL SP
- UL Posterior cerebral cortex
 - Unidirectional deficit of SP
 - Bidirectional deficit
- Near area 19,37,39
- Occipito-temporal area
- Internal capsule
- Posterior thalamic hemorrhage

Infra-tentorial

- Posterior fossa lesions
- UL MB lesions
- Basal pontine lesions
- Paramedian middle pontine infarct- Impaired SP (DLPN, NRTP) with bilateral horizontal GEN (PMT)
- MLF lesions (Vertical SP)

Sustained attention

Migraine

Sleepy patient

Drugs

Disseminated disorders

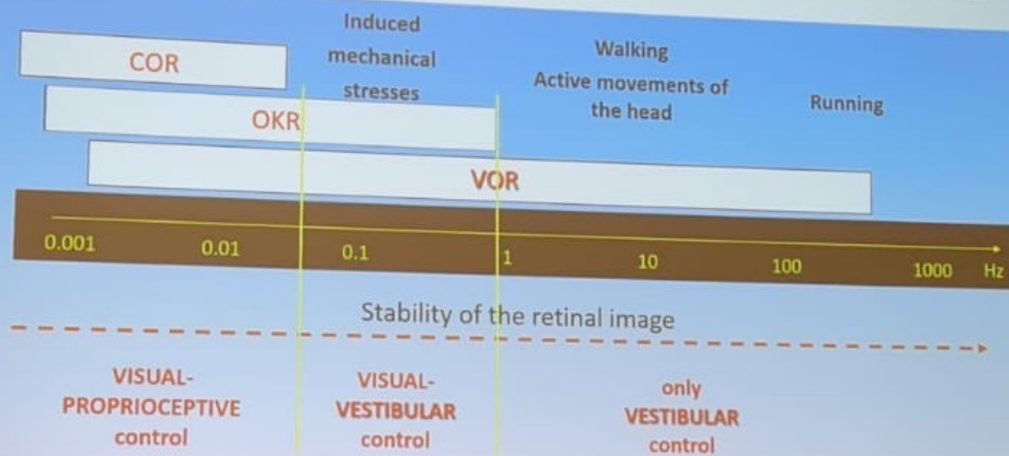
- PSP
- Huntington's disease
- Gerstmann-Straussler-Scheinker disease
- HIV related disease

Opto-kinetic testing

—

Gaze stabilization & Head movement frequency

- How effective are the vestibular, visual and proprioceptive systems in providing information on head movement and in stabilizing the gaze?

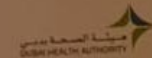


Castellucci A, 2020

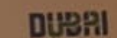
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VOR fatigues after 30 seconds



Different system required for gaze stability with continuous head motion in the same direction

Opto-kinetic Nystagmus

Ocular stabilisation system

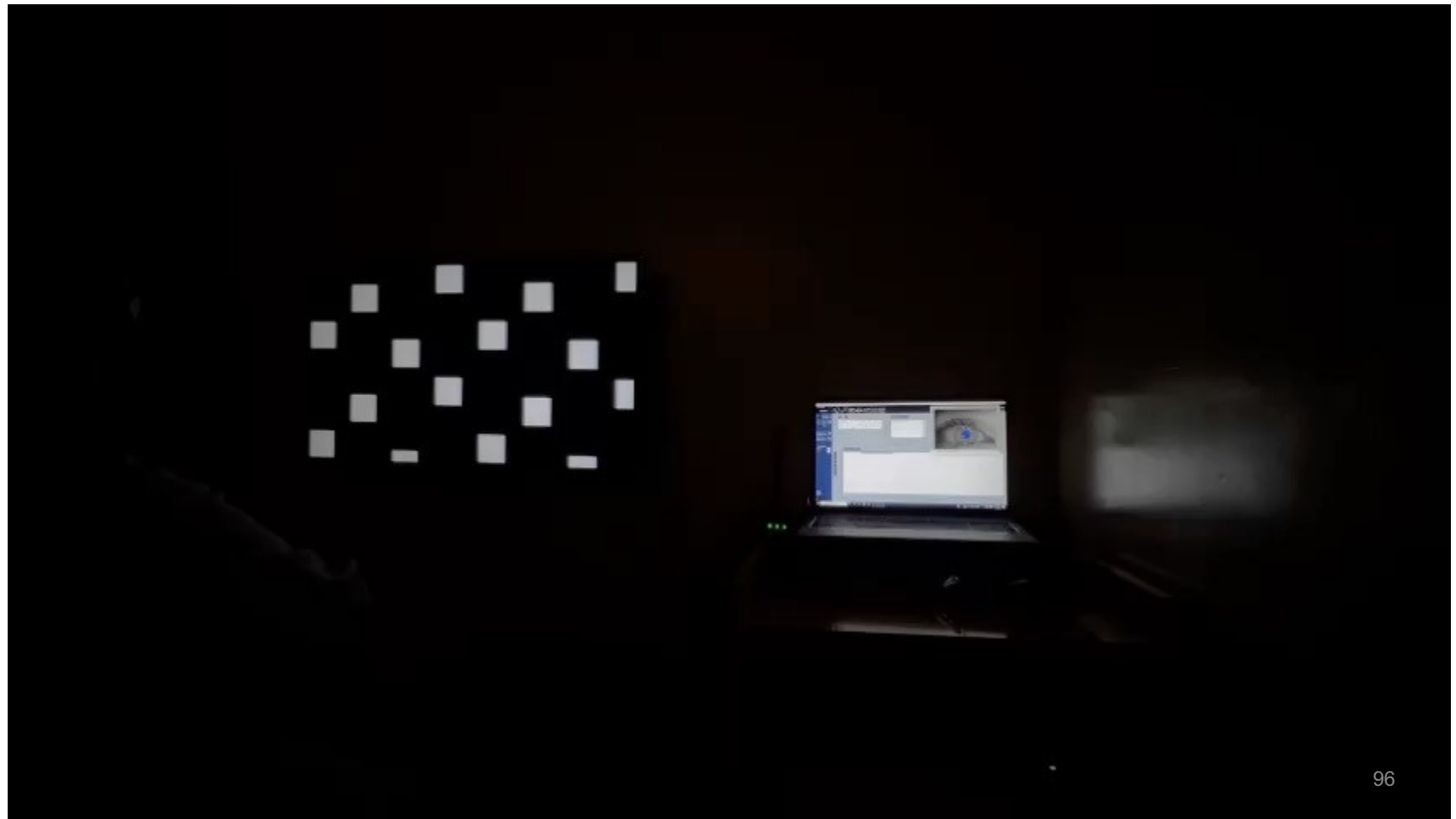
Succession of moving
stimulus
(Optic flow)

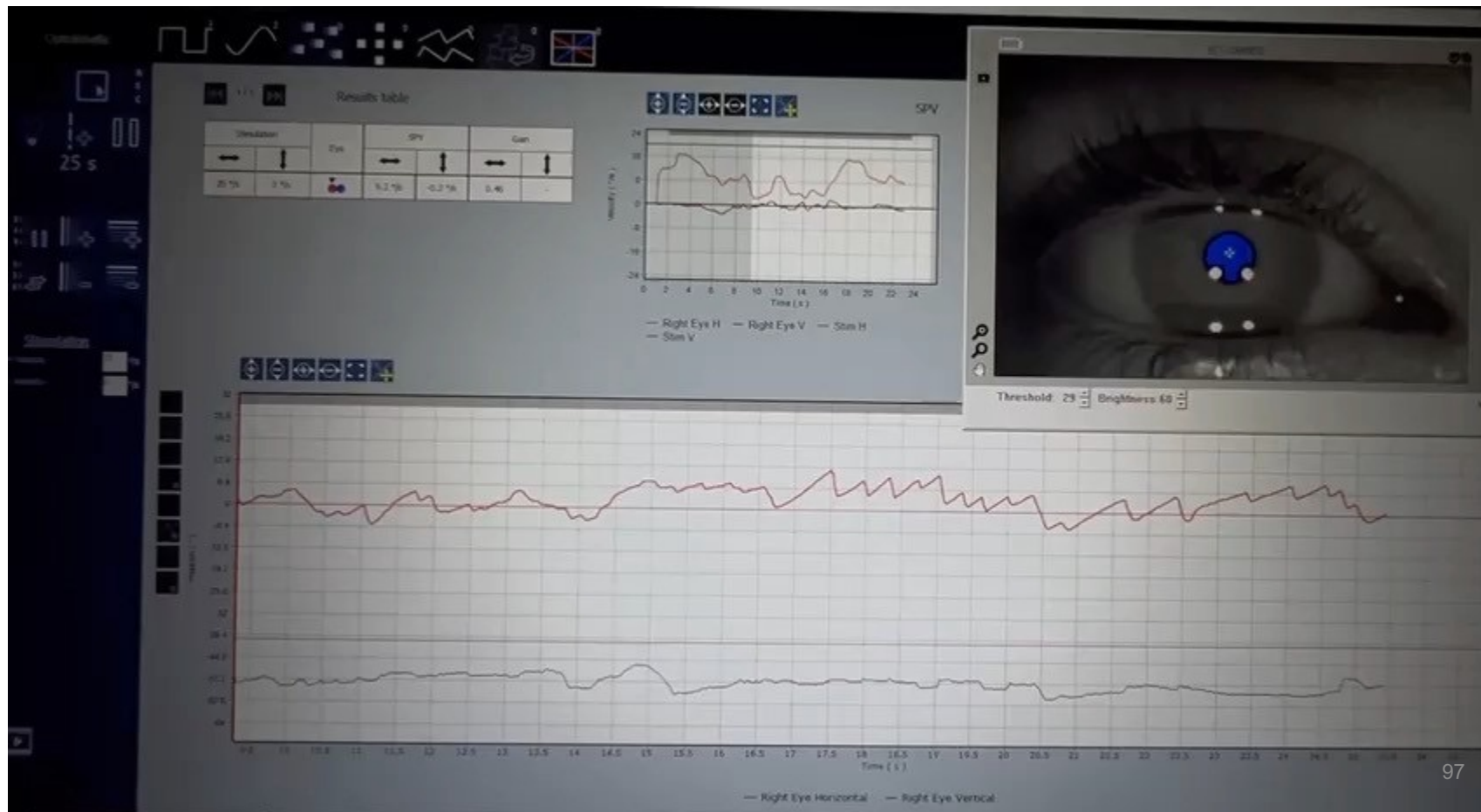
Rhythmic oculomotor
response (Nystagmus)

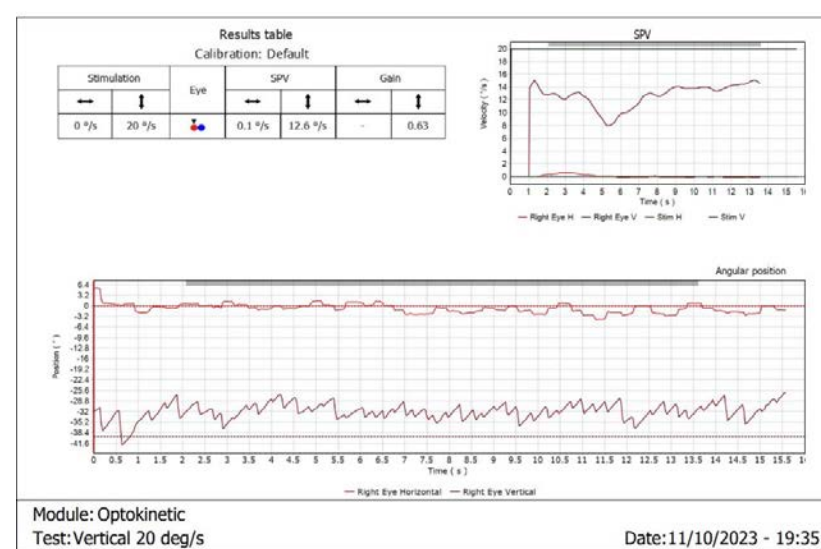
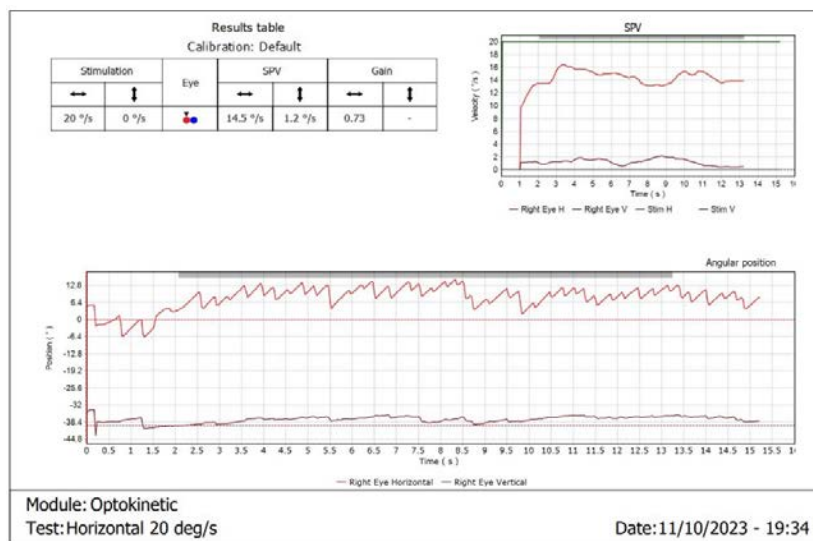
Combination of pursuit
and saccades

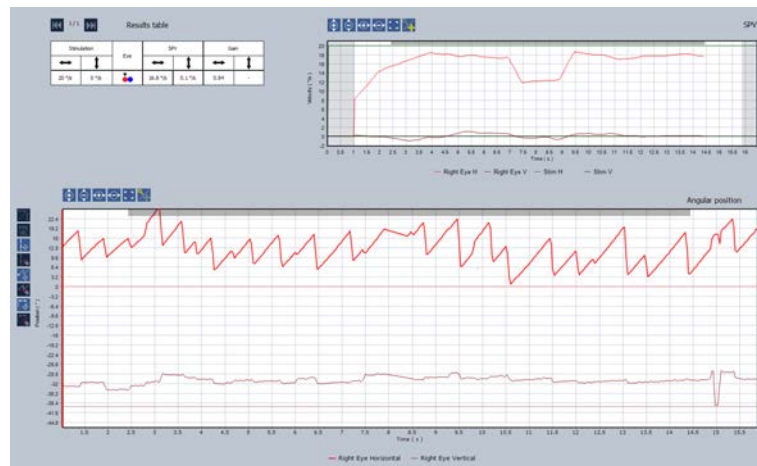
Railway nystagmus or parade nystagmus

It allows the tracking of targets in succession





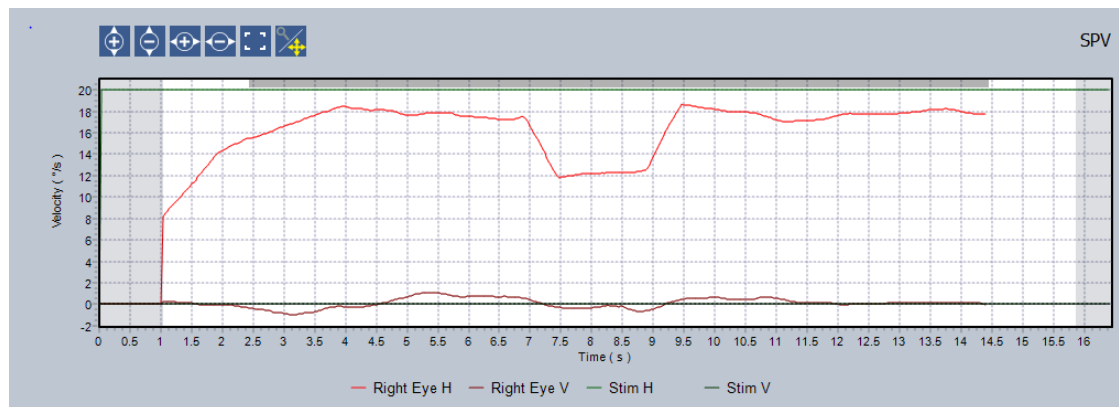


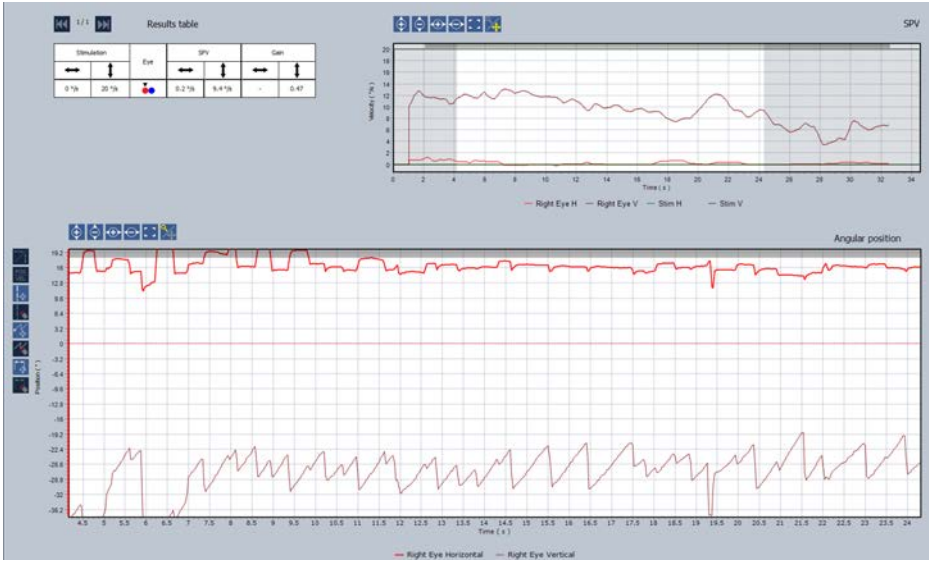
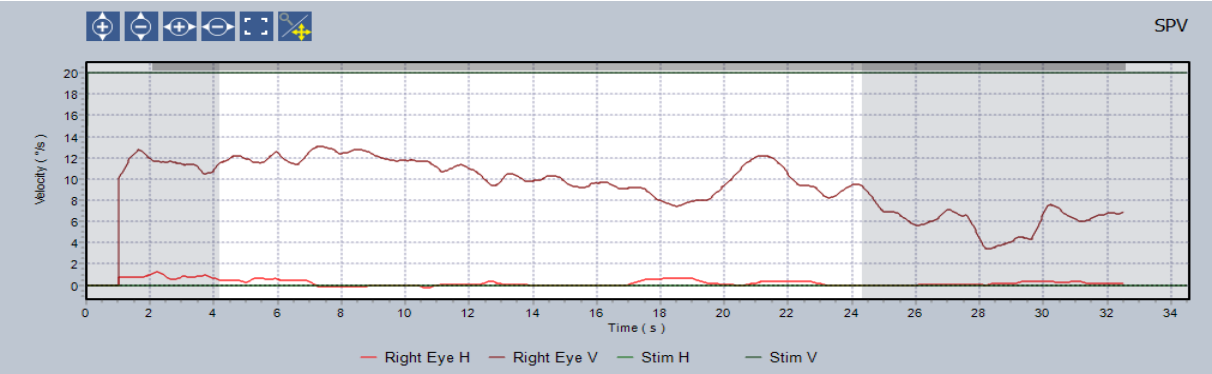


1 / 1

Results table

Stimulation		Eye	SPV		Gain	
↔	↕		↔	↕	↔	↕
20 °/s	0 °/s	↓	16.8 °/s	0.1 °/s	0.84	-





Stimulation		Eye	SPV		Gain	
↔	↕		↔	↕	↔	↕
0 °/s	20 °/s	● ●	0.2 °/s	9.4 °/s	-	0.47

Clinical significance

Anterior visual pathway defects – Reduce OK response

Parieto-occipital lesion, PSP

UL vestibulopathy- Directional preponderance

Visual acuity in infants (4-6 months)

Psychogenic blindness, Reduced LOC

Reversed OKN- Congenital nystagmus

Subtle INO

Convergence retraction nystagmus due to forced upward saccade in perinaud's syndrome

Purpose of eye movements

Hold images of the visual world steady on the retina during brief head rotations or translations (linear movements)

Hold the image of a stationary object on the fovea by minimizing ocular drifts

Hold images of the visual world steady on the retina during sustained head rotation or translations

Hold the image of a small moving target on the fovea; or holds the image of a small target on the retina that is close to the head, during linear motion (translation); with optokinetic responses, aids gaze stabilization during sustained head rotation

Bring images of objects of interest onto the fovea

Move the eyes in opposite directions so that images of a single object are placed or held simultaneously on the fovea of each eye

VERTIGO CLINIC



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Thank you



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