

Working with a HTS Trainee

Some ideas for the HTS Balance Assessment clinic

Patient management

After a history:

What do you now think is wrong with this patient (what is your best guess)?

What are the other options?

What tests are you going to do?

What other tests could you have done and why are you choosing not to?

Explain the pros and cons of 'only doing the tests indicated from the history' versus 'doing a test battery'.

After the testing:

What do you now think is wrong with this patient? Why do you think this?

What could any other possible options be? Why are you ruling these out?

What are you going to say in your debrief to the patient?

Test procedure

When and why are you changing the room illumination? What's the difference between VNG and ENG recording re room illumination?

What are the pros and cons of VNG vs ENG recording?

Why are you doing the tests in the sequence you are? What can be mixed around re order, and what can't? If you can do things in a different sequence, when might you choose to do so?

If you can't do caloric, what other tests can you substitute? What will this tell you or not tell you?

What are the pros and cons of water vs air caloric?

Explain what caloric test stimulus is doing (physiologically), and which parts of the vestibular system it is testing / not testing.

A clear understanding is required of all possible nystagmus / abnormal results on the different tests, and what each indicates.

What are the pros and cons of mental alerting on gaze test?

How can you tell between central and congenital nystagmus?

What can other testing, such as Balance-Master or rotatory testing tell you or not tell you?

Where is the normative data on your VNG equipment derived from? Is there an upper/ lower age limit on this data?

... and so on.

Calibration issues

What distance is the patient seated from the screen and why?

What is the angle of the calibration lights from centre? What happens if this distance were increased or decreased?

What is the tolerance on the flow rate and temperature for your caloric equipment? What happens if the system is outside those tolerances?

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