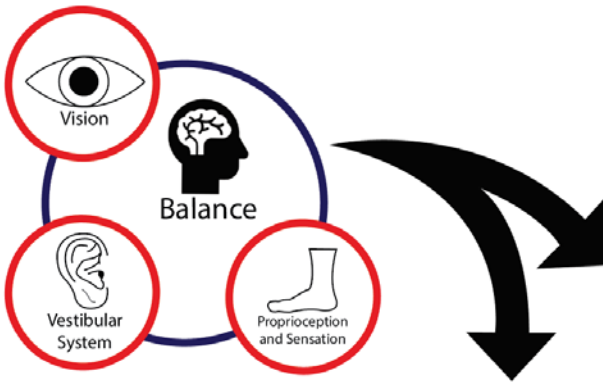


# Balance & Vestibular Therapy: A Patient's Guide



## What is Balance?

Balance relies on the visual, proprioceptive and the vestibular systems. This creates “an even distribution of weight enabling someone to remain upright and steady (1-4)”.

## What is Dizziness?

“A sensation of light-headedness, faintness, spinning sensation or unsteadiness that does not involve a rotation component (1-4)”.

Potential Cause of Dizziness/ Loss of Balance	Potential Problem
Standing up too fast	Brief decrease in blood pressure due to changing positions. Known as orthostatic hypotension (2).
Moving head around	There may be complications with your vestibular system, and/or your inner neck (4).

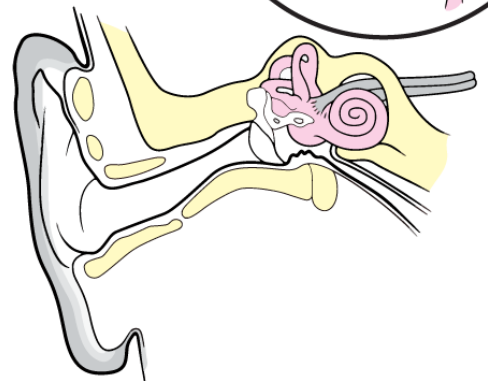
## What is the Vestibular System?

- Tubes containing liquid are found within the inner ear
- Head movement is tracked with calcium crystals attached to nerves within the tubes, that monitor the liquid's position
- Nerves and/or crystals may be dysfunctional and causing dizziness
- Alternatively, the brain may not process information from the inner ear normally



## Who May Need Vestibular Therapy?

- Fall history - dizziness related
- Concussion - mild trauma to the brain (5)
- Neck trauma - whiplash/neck trauma
- Meniere's Disease - a disease of the inner ear (3)



## What Vestibular Therapy Does

- Attempts to minimize dizziness
- Adaption to decrease symptoms
- Improve balance
- Accomplish goals through specific exercises and maneuvers

## What to Expect from A Certified Vestibular Therapist

- Talk about how bad and often your dizziness occurs, and the causes
- Assess balance, ability to walk, sensitivity to motion, and severity of dizziness
- Test muscle strength related to balance



## How to Pick a Therapist

Most physical therapists have general knowledge of vestibular therapy techniques. However, vestibular disorders can be complex, and are best managed by physical therapists who are “Certified Vestibular Therapists.” This certification requires extensive training. Certified vestibular therapists also help with balance disorders due to age, brain injury, etc. (6)

## Impact of Physical Therapy: A Patient’s Perspective

*“I was restricted from doing things that we take for granted. For example, looking up, driving, rolling over in bed, or anything else that involved moving my head. I no longer live in fear of re-occurrence. It’s like having insurance, knowing help is one phone call away to stop the spinning, if it should start again.”* Linda B.

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