

Dizziness & Vestibular Rehabilitation

Physiotherapists trained in vestibular assessment use a range of tools to determine the cause of your dizziness and provide treatment options.

Dizziness can greatly impact your daily life. It is often described as feeling light-headed, woozy, faint or off balance.

Vertigo is a type of dizziness which can feel like the room is spinning and is commonly provoked by head movements. There is often no known cause for vertigo, however it can present following a fall, bump to the head or following an illness affecting the inner ear.

Common terms you may have been diagnosed with:

- Vertigo
- Vestibular neuritis
- Post-concussion syndrome
- Vestibular migraine
- Labyrinthitis
- Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)
- Vestibular hypofunction.

Physiotherapists can diagnose some vestibular disorders

Seeing a physiotherapist for dizziness may involve:

- Asking you to describe your dizziness, how it feels, what movements make your symptoms worse and how long the symptoms last for.
- Performing tests to understand how the vestibular system is functioning, and monitor how your body responds to certain movements. This includes looking for nystagmus (involuntary eye movements).
- Asking you to perform some movements which might aggravate the dizziness.
- Ruling out other causes such as neck and posture, diet and hormonal issues, low blood pressure, hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar), anxiety and medication causes.



Physiotherapy for dizziness

Treatment for BPPV

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) is a mechanical issue causing dizziness. This is diagnosed by specialised movements physiotherapists are trained to perform. It is caused by otoconia or 'crystals' in your inner ear being displaced and affecting how the brain understands movement. It can cause a sense of the room spinning. A physiotherapist can perform certain repositioning manoeuvres to relocate these crystals and resolve dizziness in a few treatment sessions.

Vestibular rehabilitation

Vestibular rehabilitation is an effective treatment to reduce dizziness and vertigo symptoms. This involves exercises to help retrain your brain and reduce the onset and severity of dizziness. It also includes exercises to improve your balance and mobility and the stability of your eye movements.

Vestibular rehabilitation also aims to address secondary complications – for example, people who have avoided movement for a long time because they were trying to avoid dizziness, may now have reduced strength and fitness.

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