

Vestibular and Balance Rehabilitation

Vestibular and balance rehabilitation improves or eliminates symptoms of dizziness, vertigo and imbalance in certain types of disorders. It can benefit people whose symptoms of dizziness or imbalance do not improve on their own or only partially improve following medical or surgical treatment.

Patients referred for vestibular and balance rehabilitation may experience:

- Dizziness
- Vertigo
- Lightheadedness
- Frequent falls
- Unsteadiness
- A movement disorder that affects their balance

Treating Dizziness

Inner ear disorders, such as benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), cardiovascular problems and disorders of the central nervous system are just some of the reasons you may feel dizzy or off balance. Fortunately, dizziness and imbalance are often treatable.

With vestibular rehabilitation medication and/or surgery, symptoms of dizziness or imbalance may be improved or eliminated. To determine the best type of treatment, it is important to understand the cause of your dizziness and/or imbalance. Tests such as videonystagmography (VNG), Equitest® and audiometric evaluation help your physician understand the cause of your symptoms. Through a team approach that includes physicians, audiologists and physical therapists, we are committed to diagnosing and treating your symptoms.

One of the most common and treatable causes of dizziness is BPPV. In this

disorder, calcium deposits are dislodged from a part of the inner ear, causing brief, motion-provoked vertigo. The therapist maneuvers the head in a certain manner to roll the loose calcium deposits out of the inner ear area. This treatment typically takes between 20-30 minutes.

It may be necessary to receive more than one treatment. The therapist will give you specific instructions to follow for one week. We have a 95 percent treatment success rate.

Would a Visit to a Vestibular/Balance Specialist Benefit You?

Vestibular and balance rehabilitation at St. Joseph's Hospital is custom-designed for each patient by a registered physical therapist. Take the following self-test to see if you might benefit from vestibular/balance therapy:

1. Have you fallen in the past year?
2. Do you have to hold on to walls or furniture for balance?
3. Is it difficult to walk on grass or uneven surfaces?
4. Do you experience vertigo when lying or rolling on the bed?
5. Do you lose your balance when you turn or make quick movements?
6. Do you get dizzy with quick head movements or when you turn around?
7. Do you use a walker or cane? Would you like to walk independently?
8. Does your vision blur or jump when you walk or turn your head?
9. Do you have a fear of falling?
10. Do you have difficulty maintaining your balance during self-care?

If you answered "yes" to two or more of these questions, contact your physician for a referral for testing and possible therapy. Meanwhile, the following strategies may help decrease your risk of falls.

Prevent Hospital Visits: Avoid Falls in Your Home

1. Mark step edges to avoid tripping.
2. Cover walkways with non-slip surfaces.
3. Remove obstacles from walkways.
4. Secure throw rugs with non-slip backing.
5. Use chairs with armrests for support

Contact Us

For more information, please call SJ/C Physical Therapy at 912-819-8822.