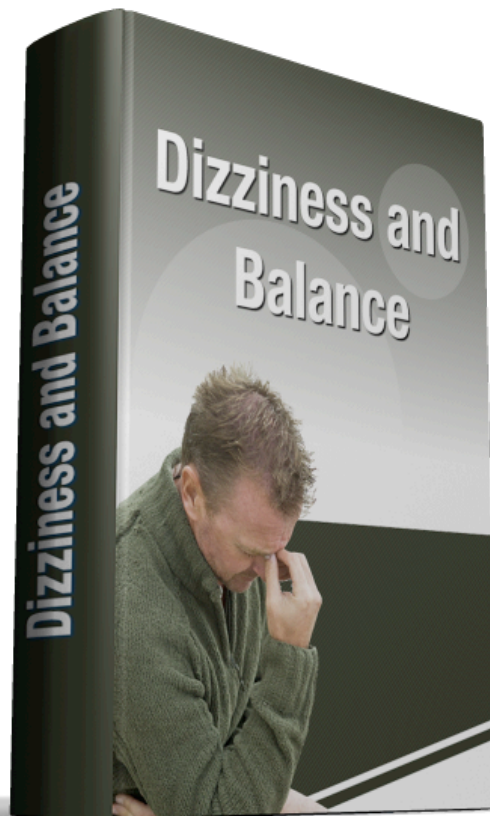


DIZZINESS AND BALANCE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Causes and Symptoms5

 Symptoms of dizziness5

 What are the causes of this dizziness?5

The Solution To Your Dizziness and Balance Problems.....8

AN END TO BALANCE AND DIZZINESS PROBLEMS FOR THE ELDERLY

Achieving good balance when walking or getting out of the chair and getting out of bed in the middle of the night is one of those things like a sixth sense; we just know how to do it. However, when we are getting older some people find this sixth sense doesn't work as well as it used to.

Doctors report that people over sixty-five years of age often complain of difficulty in balancing; they feel unsteady at times. It's not unusual for people even to fall and that can lead to much more serious problems, even requiring stays in hospital because of broken bones and so on.



✓ SYMPTOMS OF DIZZINESS

These can vary. Some people complain of a sensation of spinning or vertigo. Some people feel light-headed, all the room spinning around or a feeling of floating rather than being steady on the ground; a feeling something like being on a ship or boat. The practical problem is that these feelings can cause problems walking or they might bring on feeling sick or finding it hard to concentrate or depressed even. People can get afraid to move about and get out of the chair. And worst of all it makes it much more likely that they will fall and for all elderly people falling can be a dreadful experience and lead to serious injuries; depending on how bad the fall, of course, the injuries can be extremely serious.

✓ WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF THIS DIZZINESS?

In many cases these symptoms are the result of some defect in the functioning of the inner ear. Sometimes the symptoms are due to some disorder in the nervous system of the body, which is responsible for balance and also the sense of where we are in the space around us.

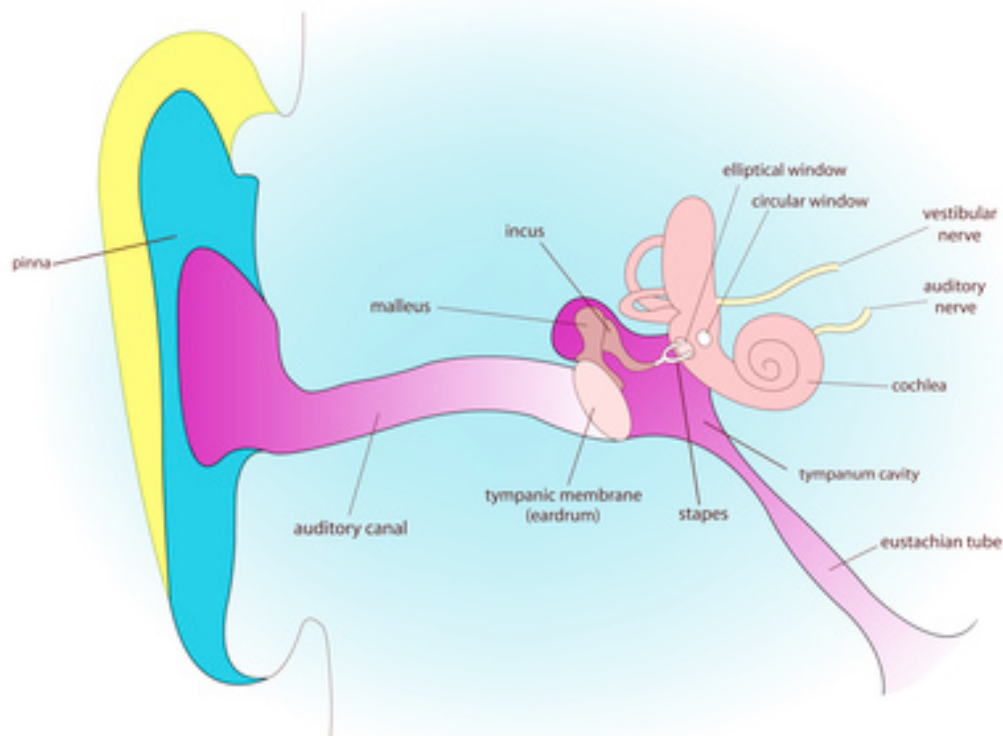
Dizziness is feeling light-headed or not steady or feeling faint. Vertigo is a feeling of being spinning round or feeling that's things around us seems to be moving; they are stationary in reality.



Most people can feel occasionally unsteady or dizzy. Just seeing a movie showing a car or airplane whizzing through the mountains can make us feel dizzy or unsteady even though we are firmly seated.

Of course, there are other causes for lack of balance and dizziness. Car accidents, infections in the inner ear, diseases like Ménière's disease, brain or nervous system conditions like Parkinson's disease and even side effects from medication use can all cause balance problems and/or dizziness. Older people

often use medications more frequently and these side effects are, of course, then more likely to be felt by older people.



Feeling dizzy and unbalanced though is not necessarily simply part of getting older. There are specific conditions where there are diseases of the inner ear which can cause us to feel dizzy but in many cases the causes for many people lie in their poor posture and the reduction in their strength, movements and stability. Physical therapists like us, who have expertise in this lack of balance problems, can first of all assess your walking, standing, balance, movements and your risk for falling. They will be able to probably find out the most likely reason why you are getting dizzy and may even visit you at home to look at what you have to do daily and what kind of situation you are in. The physical therapists will then be able to customize a treatment plan for you that will bear in mind your needs and your physical goals and your current level of activity. If appropriate they will recommend that you see a doctor if that looks to be needed. We can perform this service for you if you contact us. We are the specialists.

THE SOLUTION TO YOUR DIZZINESS AND BALANCE PROBLEMS

In most cases, there is a treatment option for your dizziness and lack of balance problems. This treatment is called Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT).

VRT is a program based on exercise meant to encourage compensation in the nervous system of the effects of problems of the inner ear. Qualified physical therapists will first do a thorough evaluation of your medical history, balance, gait and any movements you commonly need to do to compensate for your balance problems.



The therapists will then develop a treatment plan 'tailor-made' to your condition.



This plan may include such things as specific head, body and eye exercises and these will be intended to retrain the brain to better process signals from the inner ear and coordinate these signals from the eyes and nerves in the bodily muscles. There will be home-based activities and exercises for you to do in addition.

Sometimes it all might seem to get worse before it gets better but in most cases balance improves over time and the symptoms disappear. Imagine headaches, fear, and tiredness all gone!

Even in cases where surgery is required, VRT will still be important because the brain will still need retraining and home-based exercises will still be needed.



**Don't Delay – Schedule An Appointment With Us So
That We Can Help You With Your Balance Problems.**

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