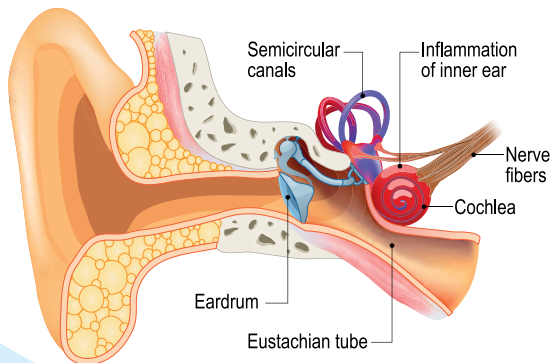


## What causes dizziness?

The most common form of dizziness and balance disorder is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), a disorder of the inner ear resulting in periods of intense dizziness following certain head movements. Other causes include side effects from medication or alcohol, brain disorders such as stroke, concussion, or changes in cerebellum, cardiac or circulation problems and anxiety.

## What is the vestibular system?

These are parts of your inner ear, brain and eyes that allow you to maintain your balance. There are three fluid-filled canals in each ear. When you move your head, the fluid moves and sends signals to the brain that allows you to keep your balance and maintain your vision clearly.



## How is it assessed?

Your specialist physiotherapist will ask questions to understand your symptoms and how they developed. You will then be given tests to assess muscles of the eye. They may move your head in different directions to see how it affects your eyes. We will be looking for Nystagmus which is a rapid movement of the eyes. This helps us to determine the best course of treatment. You may undertake the Dix-Hallpike procedure. This involves lying down quickly, but safely and with assistance, which will tell us if you have BPPV or another vestibular condition.

## How is it treated?

If we diagnose you with BPPV, your condition can be treated immediately with a procedure called the Epley manoeuvre. The procedure repositions fragments in the inner ear and most people with BPPV report significant improvement in their symptoms immediately following this procedure.

If something else is causing your dizziness, we will diagnose your problem and prescribe your treatment which could include:

- Eye and head movement exercises
- Exercises to improve your standing balance and walking
- Education and advice on activities of daily living to improve your confidence
- Advice on how you can prevent or reduce your risk of falling

## How can I prepare for my sessions?

- Please arrive on time so that you can take full advantage of the time allotted to your assessment and treatment
- Bring an up to date list of your medication
- Advise us of any of your previous medical history, particularly including any head or neck injuries
- Wear comfortable clothing that allows free movement
- Arrange someone to drive you home or be prepared to wait one hour after your treatment before you will be able to drive yourself

## What can I expect afterwards?

The clinician will discuss with you the best approach to your recovery. If necessary you may be referred to a medical consultant to have your medications reviewed, or be referred for strengthening and balance training with physiotherapy. You may be cautioned about moving in certain ways after your treatment, such as not looking up or bending forward, for 48 hours. You might be given exercises to do at home to improve the function of your vestibular system.

## Will I have to return to the clinic?

Many people need to return to follow up on their progress and have treatments modified if necessary.

Recovery from some causes of dizziness may take weeks and your next appointment may be over a month after your first appointment. This means you can practice your exercises and give the treatment time to make a lasting change to your vestibular system.

## Will I have exercises to do at home?

Yes. Most people who have problems with their vestibular system will be given exercises to do at home up to three times a day. They are generally not difficult nor time consuming, but you do need to do them regularly as advised in order to make a change.

Most dizziness develops over a period of time, therefore improvements will not happen overnight either. For a long term resolution, you will need to do your home exercises as instructed.

## Do I need a referral?

If you are self-funding then we do not need a referral, but if you have seen an ENT specialist any further information they can provide would be welcomed.

If you are using your health insurance then they may ask for a referral to be in place prior to your appointment with us.



## Contact us:

**For advice or an appointment**  
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## Vestibular Physiotherapy



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