

DIZZINESS

What is Dizziness:

Dizzy is a word used to describe many sensations felt by an individual. Light-headedness, imbalance, vertigo (the sense of spinning) are some descriptions used by people who complain of dizziness.

What causes dizziness:

Our bodies use information gathered from the eyes (our visual system), our vestibular apparatus (vestibular system) and the muscles of our neck and body (our somatosensation) to send information to our brain which allows it to determine how we are moving, to calculate how to remain upright and to respond accordingly. Typically, the information received from the various systems correspond with each other and the brain is easily able to calculate the correct response. In some cases, the brain may receive incorrect information from one of these areas, and the response to this misinformation is a sensation of dizziness. On other occasions, the information the brain receives is correct, but the brain has difficulty calculating how to respond appropriately. A trained physiotherapist can help determine where the error is occurring and develop an appropriate plan on how to best address it.

What is involved the assessment?

Much of the information can be attained through a comprehensive history taking. If you are able to, take note of the circumstances in which the dizziness occurs, and provide descriptions of the sensation felt, the duration, and how frequently you feel dizzy, as this can be valuable in helping to determine the root cause of the dizziness. A series of assessment tests will also be performed. Unfortunately, the goal of these tests is to reproduce the sensation of dizziness, as this allows us to determine where the underlying issues are. This can often make people feel a little off for a period after the session. It is highly recommended you do not schedule anything after your first appointment that is strenuous or that requires focus and attention.

Following the assessment, we will review the findings and discuss what the assessment results indicate. When appropriate, a vestibular exercise program will be prescribed.

I have been told my dizziness is due to crystals near my ear being in the wrong area and I can just google exercises— is this true?

This is a simplified explanation for one form of dizziness, called Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV). While this is a very common cause of dizziness, it may not be the root cause of your dizziness. It is not recommended you try to self-treat as 1) this may not be the underlying cause of your dizziness and 2) if the exercises are performed incorrectly, it can be easy to move those crystals to another area where they do not belong, resulting in you feeling even more dizzy and nauseous. It is recommended you see a professional with training in vestibular rehab in order to determine the cause of your dizziness and address the issue accordingly.

Who am I?

I have 17 years experience as a neurological physiotherapist and have been providing vestibular rehabilitation for the past 6 years. For clients within the Greater Victoria area, I run a mobile physiotherapy clinic focusing on vestibular dysfunction (dizziness), facial palsy, neurological conditions, TMJ disorders and concussion. I provide Telehealth appointments for Facial Palsy clients throughout British Columbia. I **prioritize seeing clients with new onset dizziness and try to see them within a week of contacting me.**

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