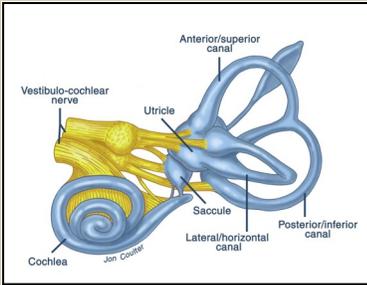




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**Vestibular Physical Therapy** is a drug-free option to effectively treat symptoms of vertigo / dizziness, motion sensitivity, and other balance disorders.



## Overview of the Vestibular System

The vestibular system is our balance organ and lies deep within the inner ear near the temporal bone of our skull. Its main components are three semicircular canals (posterior, anterior, horizontal), the cochlea, utricle, and saccule. The semicircular canals are responsible for sensing the direction and amplitude of head rotation. The cochlea is our hearing organ. The utricle senses motion in the horizontal plane, and the saccule senses motion in the vertical plane. The utricle senses motion in the carbonate crystals (otoconia), and if these crystals fall into the semicircular canal they lead to the false sense that the head and body are spinning.

## What does Vestibular Physical Therapy involve?

- Full evaluation assessing vision and visual motor skills, balance, gait, motion sensitivity, strength, sensation, flexibility, and coordination
- Hallpike test and Canalith Repositioning Techniques
- Comprehensive description of and education regarding your condition and findings
- Custom home exercise program
- One-on-one treatment based on your needs and evaluation findings
  - Balance exercises that challenge the senses to facilitate compensation of other senses
  - Habituation exercises



## Symptoms of dizziness and imbalance are usually caused by:

- Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)
- Labyrinthitis
- Vestibular Neuritis
- Bilateral Vestibular loss from Ototoxicity
- Meniere's Disease
- Head Trauma
- Tumors
- Stroke / TIA's

## Common Vestibular Disorders treated with Physical Therapy

**BPPV (benign paroxysmal positional vertigo):** BPPV is the most common and easily treated of the vestibular disorders. It occurs when crystals in the inner ear fall into one of the semicircular canals. When this happens you will feel a sense of spinning or vertigo. The vertigo most commonly occurs when you roll over in bed, look up, or bend over and usually lasts under a minute. In addition to vertigo, you may feel unsteady and nauseous. In most instances there is no cause, but occasionally BPPV can occur as the result of a fall or head trauma.

**Labyrinthitis / Vestibular Neuritis:** Both diagnoses are commonly caused by a viral infection. This infection causes inflammation of the vestibular nerve. The main symptom is an acute onset of prolonged severe vertigo that is exacerbated by head movements associated with nausea and imbalance. If temporary or permanent hearing loss also occurs with the above symptoms then a diagnosis of labyrinthitis is made.

**Meiner's Disease:** A diagnosis of Meiner's Disease is given when someone experiences several events that involve fullness of the ear, reduced hearing, tinnitus (ringing in the ear) vertigo, imbalance, as well as nausea and vomiting. When the event is not occurring, hearing will return, but possibly not to baseline.

**Migraine Associated Vertigo (MAV):** Approximately 35% of patients that have migraines have some kind of vestibular syndrome, at one point or another. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, dizziness, sensitivity to light, motion sickness, vertigo, tinnitus, hearing loss, imbalance, and neck pain. The best course of treatment is a combination of medicine, physical therapy, and diet changes. Vestibular Physical Therapy can assist in decreasing muscle tension, dizziness, and improving balance.

## Q and A:

### Do I have a Vestibular Disorder?

- Do you have a sensation of faintness, lightheadedness, or unsteadiness?
- Do you have the sensation that you or the room or space around you is spinning?
- Are you experiencing a sense of disequilibrium or imbalance?
- Have you experienced a change in hearing and/or blurred vision?
- Have you had symptoms of nausea, vomiting, motion sickness, and/or headaches?

If you have answered "yes" to any of the above questions, you may have a Vestibular Disorder.