

DAMINI PHYSIOTHERAPY PATIENT INFORMATION ARTICLE #5

Possible Symptoms of Vestibular Disorders

Many of the symptoms experienced by people affected by dizziness and balance disorders can be obscure or frightening. This list is incomplete. It does not apply to everyone with an inner-ear disorder, and some of these symptoms can be unrelated to the ear. Even so, this list may aid those who have been unable to make sense out of their seemingly abnormal sensations and symptoms.

Vision

- Objects appear to jump. (Silverware jumps off of the table, stairs swing.)
- Reading difficulty. (Print moves. Vision blurs or doubles. Words or letters switch places.)
- Writing difficulty.
- Lights glow or emit rays; glare is intensified.
- You have a tendency to look down..
- Discomfort increases when you focus at a distance.
- Increased night blindness.
- Poor depth perception.
- Moving or flickering lights may be disturbing.

Hearing

- Hearing can fluctuate, be lost completely, or be unaffected.
- Distortions such as popping, clicking, ringing, or buzzing can occur.
- Loud environments may be uncomfortable or sickening.
- Your ears may feel full.

Nausea

- Continual or intermittent nausea.
- A "hangover" feeling or seasick sensation in the head and/or stomach.
- Motion sickness.

Memory

- Poor memory.
- You may forget what you are talking about, or grope for words.
- Confusion, disorientation, inability to comprehend directions and instructions.

Coordination

- Clumsiness. (You may drop things, have difficulty threading needles.)
- Sensation of heavy weights on the head.
- Imbalance.
- Muscle and joint pain.
- Rocking sensation (as if you are in a rowboat).
- Difficulty walking straight.
- Slurred speech.

Emotions

- Loss of self-reliance, self-confidence, self-esteem.

- Distraction, anxiety, phobia, panic attacks.
- Depression.

Other

- Headaches.
- Discomfort caused by temperature changes, pressure changes, wind currents.
- Symptoms worsen with altitude changes.
- Fatigue; everyday tasks are exhausting.
- Violent whirling sensations (vertigo), vomiting.

The human balance system depends on information that the brain receives from the eyes, the muscles and joints of the body, and the inner ear. If the inner ear is damaged: the brain may receive incorrect information. The result may be dizziness or imbalance problems.

There are many different symptoms of inner-ear vestibular disorders and many degrees of severity. An inner-ear disorder may be present even in the absence of imbalance, a hearing problem, or vertigo.

People affected by some of these symptoms may be perceived as inattentive or lazy, or may be thought to be hypochondriacs. Well-educated people may have difficulty reading or doing simple math. Keeping a job, going to school, performing routine tasks or just getting out of bed in the morning may be difficult for some people.

Getting a diagnosed, adhering to your treatment, and learning as much as you can about your problem will assist you in your recovery.

For feedback, questions and input in relation to the articles please contact Damini Physiotherapy.