

Vestibular Rehabilitation Exercises

Exercises for dizziness, vertigo and imbalance

The process of getting over dizziness or vertigo is exactly the same as when a sailor gets his or her “sea legs”, or a dancer learns to spin around without getting dizzy. The only way that the balance system can overcome dizziness and imbalance is by practicing the movements and situations that cause dizziness. The aim of these exercises is to give the balance system all the practice it needs at a time and place where you will not be distracted or put at risk.

The exercises listed below should be performed twice a day. Make sure you carry them out somewhere safe, where you will not bump into anything sharp or hard. At first the exercises will probably make you feel a bit dizzy and sick, and you may experience some tiredness and headache. These feelings may last for a little while after you have done the exercises, or may even come on some time later. Do not worry about these feelings—they are signs that the exercises are working. If the dizziness and sickness are very unpleasant or are causing problems, then do the exercises more slowly and do fewer of them at first. As you recover, you can gradually increase the number and speed of the exercises you do. If the exercises seem to bring on any of the symptoms listed below (which is very unlikely), stop doing them at once and call your physician.

Stop doing the exercises if you experience:

- Sharp, severe or prolonged pain in your neck, head, or ear
 - Sensation of fullness, deafness, or noises in the ear
 - Fainting, loss of consciousness, blacking out, or double vision
 - Numbness, weakness, or tingling in your arms or legs
1. Sit upright with your legs out in front of you. Quickly lie straight down on your back. Wait for your symptoms to calm down, and then sit back up again. Repeat 2 or 3 times. Advanced stage. When you can do this exercise without dizziness, try it with your head turned first to the left and then to the right.
 2. Sitting in a chair, bend forward and bring your head down halfway toward your knees. Wait for your symptoms to calm down, and then sit back up again. Repeat 2 or 3 times. Advanced stage. When you can do this exercise without dizziness, try it with your head turned first to the left and then to the right.
 3. Sitting in a chair, quickly turn your head and eyes from left to right, 5 times in each direction, as if you were watching a tennis match. Try to focus on an object in each direction. Stop, wait for your symptoms to go away, and repeat 3 times. Advanced stage. When you can do this exercise without dizziness, try doing it while you are standing up.
 4. Repeat exercise 3, but look up and down instead of left and right. Advanced stage. When you can do this exercise without dizziness, try doing it while you are standing up.
 5. Do exercise 3 with your eyes closed. (Do not do this exercise standing up.)
 6. Do exercise 4 with your eyes closed. (Do not do this exercise standing up.)
 7. Sit in a chair with one arm outstretched in front of you with your first finger pointing up. Stare at your finger and turn your head to the left and right 10 times. Start slowly and gradually speed up. Repeat 3 times.
 8. Repeat exercise 7, but hold your finger sideways and move your head up and down.

General balance training

Go for a walk (include some stairs or hills if possible) or play a ball game either for 5 to 10 minutes, 5 days a week, or for 15 to 30 minutes, 3 days a week.