



VESTIBULAR

DISORDERS ASSOCIATION

Balance Awareness Week

September 16th – 22nd, 2012

Facts, Figures & Trivia

How many people have vestibular disorders?

Adult vestibular disorders are typically under diagnosed and undertreated. An estimated **35.4% of US adults aged 40 years and older (109 million Americans)** experience vestibular dysfunction at some point in their lives; a percentage of this group go on to develop a chronic vestibular disorder.

What are typical symptoms and signs of a vestibular disorder?

The primary symptoms of a vestibular disorder include dizziness, vertigo, and disequilibrium.

Dizziness is a sensation of lightheadedness, faintness, or unsteadiness. **Vertigo** is the perception of movement of the self or surrounding objects and has a rotational, spinning component. Dizziness can be a symptom of many diseases and disorders, but frequent episodes of vertigo —whether lasting only for a few seconds or days on end—are a primary sign of vestibular dysfunction.

Disequilibrium simply means unsteadiness and imbalance that is often accompanied by spatial disorientation. A person with a vestibular disorder may frequently stumble and have difficulty walking straight or turning a corner.

Other possible symptoms and signs of a vestibular disorder may include:

- ❖ Visual-spatial problems
- ❖ Hearing loss and/or tinnitus (i.e. ringing in the ears)

- ❖ Excessive clumsiness, including frequent falls and problems with eye-hand and eye-foot coordination
- ❖ Difficulty moving in the dark
- ❖ Difficulty reading and concentrating
- ❖ Increased levels of anxiety

How does imbalance affect quality of life?

An estimated 33% of all adults with chronic imbalance experience problems performing basic activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, and eating.

Children with vestibular disorders can face impairments of motor development and balance and learning challenges at school.

How do vestibular disorders impact health care systems?

In the US, medical care for patients with chronic balance disorders exceeds \$1 billion per year.

Trivia

- ❖ Vincent Van Gogh's painting "Starry Night" is reportedly a representation of the dizziness he experienced due to Ménière's disease.
- ❖ Pop star Janet Jackson suffers from Migraine Associated Vertigo (MAV).
- ❖ William Shatner was struck with Tinnitus as a result of a special effects blast during the filming of "Star Trek."

To learn more about vestibular disorders, visit vestibular.org or call (800) 837-8428.