

Vestibular What?

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The vestibular system includes the parts of the inner ear and brain that process sensory information involved with balance. Vestibular disorders can be caused by disease, injury, poisoning by drugs or chemicals, autoimmune causes, traumatic brain injury, or aging. Many vestibular disorders occur from unexplained causes.

Symptoms of vestibular disorders include dizziness, vertigo (a spinning sensation), imbalance, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), fatigue, jumping vision, nausea/vomiting, hearing loss, anxiety, and cognitive difficulties.



Vestibular disorders are difficult to diagnose. It is common for a patient to consult 4 or more physicians over a period several years before receiving an accurate diagnosis. Over 35% of US adults aged 40 years and older (69 million Americans) have had a vestibular dysfunction at some point in their lives.

There is no "cure" for most vestibular disorders. They may be treated with medication, physical therapy, lifestyle changes (e.g. diet, exercise), surgery, or positional maneuvers. In most cases, patients must adapt to a host of life-altering limitations.



Vestibular disorders impact patients and their families physically, mentally, and emotionally. In addition to physical symptoms such as dizziness and vertigo, vestibular patients can experience poor concentration, memory, and mental fatigue. Many vestibular patients suffer from anxiety and depression due to fear of falling and the loss of their independence.

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