



BALANCE AWARENESS WEEK to **DEFEAT** *DIZZINESS*

Balance Awareness Week

September 16 – 22, 2013

10 Important Talking Points About the Balance (Vestibular) System

Here are 10 important items that you can share to help raise awareness.

1. The word “**vestibular**” refers to the inner-ear balance system. To achieve good physical balance we rely on our brain, eyes, inner-ear, and muscular-skeletal system to work in harmony. Balance is commonly taken for granted until it is impaired.
2. Over 35% of US adults aged 40 years and older (**69 million Americans**) have had vestibular dysfunction at some point in their lives.
3. Balance problems can occur from **many reasons**: inner-ear disease, a virus, a traumatic brain injury, poisoning by certain antibiotics (ototoxicity), autoimmune causes, migraines, and aging.
4. People with vestibular disorders are **challenged with the following symptoms**: vertigo (spinning sensation), dizziness, fatigue, jumping vision, unsteadiness, “brain fog”, nausea/vomiting, hearing loss, and ringing in the ears (tinnitus).
5. People with vestibular disorders can **suffer** cognitive impacts, such as poor concentration, memory, and word recall; difficulty reading while tracking printed text; and impaired mental stamina.
6. An often **successful treatment** is Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT). VRT has been shown to be an important part of the management of vestibular patients and can improve by 70-80%.
7. Some **low-impact exercise routines** can improve balance, such as Tai Chi, yoga or use of the Wii video game along with the Wii Balance Board.
8. Balance disorders are an **invisible chronic** illness. Because they are “invisible,” others frequently assume the patient is overreacting or faking their symptoms.
9. Early research on the vestibular system came from **NASA’s study** on returning astronauts in the space program.
10. A support group can provide helpful **information and support**. To find a vestibular disorders support group in your area visit VEDA’s website at <http://vestibular.org/finding-help-support/support-directory>.

To learn more about vestibular disorders, visit vestibular.org or call 800.837.8428.