
SYMPTOMS

MAKE A LIST

Identifying your symptoms can help you communicate with your healthcare provider to get an accurate diagnosis.

ARTICLE

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Vestibular Symptoms

By Vestibular Disorders Association

The vestibular system includes the parts of the inner ear and brain that help control balance and eye movements. If the system is damaged by disease, aging, or injury, vestibular disorders can result, and are often associated with one or more of these symptoms, among others:

DIZZINESS

A sensation of lightheadedness, faintness, or unsteadiness. Imbalance: Unsteadiness or loss of equilibrium that is often accompanied by spatial disorientation.

VERTIGO

A rotational, spinning component, and is the perception of movement, either of the self or surrounding objects.

BRAIN FOG

When the brain is dedicating a great deal of energy to maintain equilibrium and stay steady, activities such as recalling details or short-term memory may become more difficult, and thinking might seem "slow".

TINNITUS

Abnormal noise perceived in one or both ears or in the head. May be intermittent or continuous and can be experienced as a ringing, hissing, whistling, buzzing, or clicking sound and can vary in pitch from a low roar to a high squeal.

HEARING LOSS

Reduction in the ability to hear sounds is a common symptom of many vestibular disorders. When VeDA conducted a patient poll, over two thirds reported that they had hearing loss in one or both ears.



VISION IMPAIRMENT

The link between the vestibular system and vision, vestibulo-ocular reflex (VOR), is described in detail with information on evaluation, treatment, coping strategies, and potential solutions for vision correction, including glasses and contact lenses.

NAUSEA

The feeling of being nauseated.

COGNITIVE CHANGES

Difficulty thinking, paying attention/concentrating, recalling basic facts (such as your own phone number), short-term memory loss, etc.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES

Due to the unpredictable nature of symptoms and the chronic nature of most disorders, vestibular patients tend to suffer from anxiety and/or depression.

MOTION SICKNESS

Symptoms appear when the central nervous system receives conflicting messages from the visual system and the vestibular system in the inner ears.

DEREALIZATION

Includes feelings of being alienated from or unfamiliar with your surroundings, emotionally disconnected from people you care about, and/or distortions in time or size and shape of objects.

DEPERSONALIZATION

Feelings that you're an outside observer of your thoughts, feelings, your body or parts of your body; emotional numbness.

TYPES OF VESTIBULAR DISORDERS

There are many conditions that affect the vestibular system and cause vertigo, dizziness, imbalance, and the other symptoms listed in this article. Many people find it helpful to learn about the clusters of symptoms that go along with each diagnosis, as well as the treatment options that can help you learn to live a life rebalanced.

Learn more at vestibular.org/disorders

POSSIBLE VESTIBULAR SYMPTOMS

Dizziness

Vertigo

Brain Fog

Tinnitus

Hearing Loss

Visual Impairment

Nausea

Cognitive Changes

Psychological Changes

Motion Sickness

Derealization

Depersonalization

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