



FUN ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO EVEN WITH A VESTIBULAR DISORDER

By David Morrill & his support group

Vestibular disorders can limit your life in so many ways, including things you do for enjoyment. However, fun activities can go a long way to helping your physical and mental wellbeing. The goal of this discussion is to discover something you can enjoy despite your disability.

*Note: Everyone's limitations are different. What provokes one person's symptoms may not affect another person. Through trial and error you can identify your boundaries. If you try something and it doesn't work for you, stop. Be kind to yourself, and above all, be safe.

Also recognize that you may need to make accommodations to some activities. You may not be able to do them the way you used to do them, but with supportive devices, for example, or additional time, you may still be able to enjoy them. Discussion: Ask your group members what types of accommodations they have used.

1. Vacation/traveling: Find ways to prepare yourself and your family so you can overcome the difficulties your vestibular disorder presents while traveling.
2. Dancing: Believe it or not, there are ways to overcome dizzy disorders while learning dance moves.
3. Horseback riding: Learning to ride a horse is not only fun, it can also be therapeutic.
4. Volunteer: Volunteering some of your time can be helpful to you as well as the organization, bringing meaning into your life and making you feel worthwhile.
5. Hobbies: If you are homebound, hobbies are a great way to engage yourself as well to help take your mind off your disorder. Some examples of hobbies many vestibular patients engage in include:
 - a. Knitting, crocheting, and needlepoint
 - b. Painting/arts & crafts
6. Enhancing your Education: Thanks to the availability of online or even local community colleges, there are lots of opportunities to find something to challenge your mind.
7. Writing: Writing can be therapeutic, and for some people, enjoyable. Some specific types of writing include:
 - a. Blogs: You can write short articles as ideas come to you
 - b. Journaling: Since you're only talking to yourself, you can say anything
 - c. Books: Many vestibular patients have written books about their vestibular journey and coping strategies
8. Exercise: Many types of exercise help improve balance. The endorphins you get by exercising can also improve your mood.
 - a. Swimming: Aquatic therapy is a great way to reduce stress and to get a low impact exercise.
 - b. Yoga & tai chi are also low impact, and improve balance.

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- c. Walking/Hiking: Find ways you can make a walk or hike safe to accommodate your specific disorder.
9. Relax: Sometimes the best fun is to just relax. This will help you regenerate your brain and give you the energy you need to accomplish your goals. Here are some suggestions:
 - a. Meditate - you might want to use an app like Headspace
 - b. Massage - get a massage, acupuncture treatment, or take a full spa day!
 - c. Take a nap - you deserve it!
10. Listen to music: This may be challenging for people with hearing loss, but if you have digital hearing aids, there are headphones that will connect to them to pipe the music directly into your ears.
11. Gardening: Many people find the repetitive nature of gardening, and being with plants, relaxing. Bending down can be difficult for some vestibular patients, but you can try using a gardening stool.
12. Hanging out with friends: You don't even have to do anything. Have a cup of tea, talk, watch a movie. Companionship can go a long way to supporting happiness and well-being.