

Managing your Dizziness

For all enquiries:

65 Holmes Road Moonee Ponds Vic 3039

Phone: 1300 357 338 Fax: 1300 247 338

Email: reception@entnorth.com.au

Visit: www.entnorth.com.au



ENT North

For most people, dizziness is a temporary or intermittent problem that doesn't require any long-term changes to your way of life. However, if you have ongoing dizziness that affects your activities, the following actions can make you much more functional, and often decrease your discomfort and unsteadiness.

Plan your activities and pace yourself:

- Get out of the house at least once a day

Diet:

- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water per day
- Watch your diet
- Limit salt and sugar intake
- Keep your weight normal

Medication and drugs:

- Discuss all medications with your ENT Doctor
- Avoid alcohol, tranquilizers, strong pain relief tablets, and sleeping pills. These medications will make you more dizzy
- STOP smoking.

If you have sudden attacks:

- Don't drive
- Don't swim
- Sit or lie down if you feel dizzy
- Don't continue what you are doing

Avoid rapid changes in head position and extremes

of head motion:

- Turn side to side slowly
- Get up or down slowly
- Avoid looking up suddenly
- Avoid turning very fast or twisting.

Avoid falls

- Wear flat or low-heeled shoes with firm soles.
- Don't climb ladders
- Let your hand glide along a wall or support
- Touch furniture
- Hold on to railings
- Place rubber mats or non-skid strips in your bathtub or shower
- When showering hold onto a bar or wall, keep your eyes open at all times and avoid tipping your head back.
- Sit down in the shower if needed.
- Keep a night light on
- Keep your path to the bathroom clear
- Use solid soled slippers at night
- Keep your home clear of obstacles

- Keep phone and light cords out of the way
- Keep kids toys and animal dishes out of the way
- Eliminate all loose rugs, like throw rugs
- Hold securely to support rails on stairs or escalators
- Go up and down stairs slowly
- Don't look around when on stairs
- Use caution when walking on uneven surfaces
- Go slowly on rocky shorelines, icy roads, gravel, sand
- Plan your path on sidewalks and parking lots.

If necessary, get help when walking

- Use a cane
- Take someone's arm for support

Visual input:

- Wear sunglasses outside in bright sunlight
- Avoid fluorescent lights
- Replace fluorescent bulbs with broad-spectrum bulbs.
- Avoid excessive visual input
- Avoid looking at busy patterns in wall paper or rugs
- Go slowly down grocery or shopping aisles
- Take one side of an aisle at a time. Don't go back and forth, side to side

Travelling

- Discuss driving with your ENT doctor
- Don't drive if dizzy or taking medications.
- Don't read in the car
- Sit in the front seat of the car or bus
- Focus on the horizon
- Don't read in the car

Try "spotting"

- Keep looking at a stationary object
- Focus on a non-moving object when changing directions
- Keep your focus if there is excessive visual input.

Vertigo Exercises

The goal of these exercises is to help your body adapt to normal movements without making you dizzy. First we find the most provocative, or “dizzy producing” activity you are able to do safely. Work on that activity until you are safe and not dizzy. Add more activities as you improve. Also try and include an aerobic exercise program in addition to your specific vestibular exercises. A schedule of twenty minutes three times a week is a good aerobic activity program. Safety during exercise is very important; work with your GP or physiotherapist about safety in exercise. If you experience any back or neck pain, stop exercising and contact your GP or physiotherapist.

- If you experience any of the following symptoms, stop exercising and contact your GP or ENT Surgeon:
 - Sudden hearing loss or changes in hearing.
 - Pressure and fullness to the point of discomfort
 - Fluid draining from your ears
 - Severe ringing in your ear/s
 - Any other changes that you are concerned about.

Practice 2-3 exercises for at least 5 minutes every day and you can build up your tolerance to vertigo while it lasts.

Lying Down:

Eye movements, first slowly and then rapidly:

- Up and down
- Side to side

Focusing on your finger as it moves from 3 feet away to close to your nose.

Head Movements:

First slowly and then rapidly, initially with eyes open and later with eyes closed:

- Bending forwards and backwards
- Turning from side to side.

Sitting Exercises:

- Shoulder shrugging
- Bending forwards and picking up objects from floor
- Sitting down and standing up with eyes open and closed.

Standing Exercises:

- Throwing a small ball from hand to hand.
- Throwing the ball from hand to hand under your knee.
- Sitting down and standing up, then turning around 360 degrees.

Exercises while Moving:

- Circle around a person who throws a large ball to you.
- Walk across the room first with eyes open and then with eyes closed.
- Walk up and down a slope with eyes open and then with eyes closed.
- Walk up and down stairs with eyes open and eyes closed.
- Any game with bending, stretching and aiming e.g..skittles, bowling, basketball.