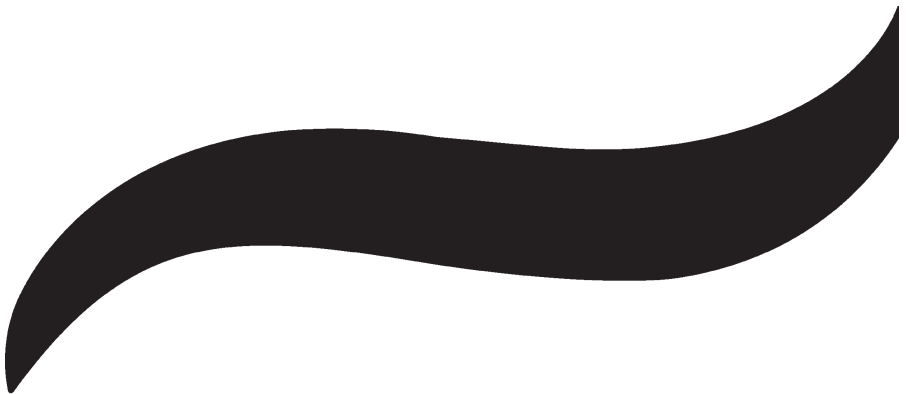




Vestibular Neuritis and Labyrinthitis

Information for patients
Physiotherapy



WHAT IS VESTIBULAR NEURITIS?

This is a condition that is caused by inflammation or pressure on the vestibular nerve. The vestibular nerve sends messages between the inner ear and the brain about movement. This can be inflamed due to infection, a virus, reduced blood flow or exposure to allergens or toxic substances.

Vestibular neuritis can cause you to feel a sudden onset of spinning, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, imbalance and difficulty walking. Severe symptoms will be present for a few days and the severity of these symptoms will reduce over time. It is common that quick movements of the head will continue to trigger symptoms over the next few weeks or months.

WHAT IS LABYRINTHITIS?

Labyrinthitis is when infection or inflammation occurs in the portion of the inner ear called the labyrinth. The symptoms include; sudden hearing loss, spinning sensation and loss of balance. Initially symptoms of vertigo can be constant, gradually improving to intermittent dizziness and imbalance with particular head movements or position changes. With sudden onset of hearing loss it is important to seek advice for a medical professional.

HOW ARE THEY TREATED?

Your doctor may give you medication initially to settle the symptoms. It is important to move around as normally as soon as possible and move your head to allow the system to recover. Vestibular exercises will help your system return to normal and you to return to your normal activities. The earlier you do this the quicker your system will recover.

Many people get into the habit of avoiding positions and situations that trigger their symptoms, these habits will slow down recovery and lead to additional problems.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THEM TO IMPROVE?

Research suggests it takes on average 8 weeks for your system to readjust. However, each individual will respond differently, and your recovery will depend on the amount of pressure on the nerve/inner ear, the length of time you have been living with your symptoms, age and your general activity level. In some cases minor symptoms may remain.

For further advice and information please see our website:

<https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/vestibular-physiotherapy/>

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