



Disclaimer: This leaflet provides general information and should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice. It is essential to consult with a qualified healthcare professional for any health concerns or before making any decisions related to your health or treatment.

Overview

Vestibular neuronitis is a condition that affects the vestibular nerve, which is responsible for sending information about balance and spatial orientation from the inner ear to the brain. This condition can cause sudden onset of vertigo (a spinning sensation), dizziness, nausea, and vomiting. These symptoms can be severe and debilitating, making it difficult to perform everyday activities.

Symptoms and Causes

The main symptom of vestibular neuronitis is sudden onset of vertigo, which can last for several days or even weeks. Other symptoms may include:

- Dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Imbalance
- Difficulty walking
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light and sound

The exact cause of vestibular neuronitis is unknown, but it is thought to be caused by a viral infection that affects the vestibular nerve.

Diagnosis and Investigations

A diagnosis of vestibular neuronitis is usually made based on your symptoms and a physical examination.

Your doctor may also order some tests to rule out other conditions, such as:

- Hearing test
- Electronystagmography (ENG)
- Caloric testing
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

Management and Treatment

The goal of treatment for vestibular neuronitis is to relieve your symptoms and help you regain your balance.

Treatment may include:

- Medications to relieve nausea and vomiting
- Vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT)
- Home exercises

Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT)

VRT is a type of physical therapy that helps you regain your balance and reduce your dizziness. A VRT program will typically include exercises to:

- Improve your gaze stability
- Increase your balance
- Reduce your sensitivity to movement

Your physiotherapist will work with you to develop a VRT program that is tailored to your individual needs.

Home Exercises

You can also do some exercises at home to help improve your balance. These exercises should be done slowly, carefully and in a safe environment.

Frequency of Home Exercises

The frequency of your home exercises will depend on the severity of your symptoms. In general, you should aim to do the exercises at least three times a day. As your symptoms improve, you can gradually reduce the frequency of the exercises.

Home Exercise Program

The following are some examples of home exercises that you can do for vestibular neuronitis:

Eye Exercises

- **Gaze stabilization:** Focus on a stationary object while moving your head slowly from side to side and up and down.
- **Saccades:** Quickly move your eyes back and forth between two targets.
- **Smooth pursuits:** Follow a moving target with your eyes.

Head Exercises

- **Head turns:** Slowly turn your head from side to side.
- **Head nods:** Slowly nod your head up and down.
- **Head tilts:** Slowly tilt your head from side to side.

Balance Exercises

- **Single-leg stance:** Stand on one leg with your eyes open, then closed.
- **Heel-toe walk:** Walk in a straight line, placing one foot directly in front of the other.
- **Clock reach:** Stand with your feet apart and reach for different points on an imaginary clock face.

Other Exercises

- **Walking:** Start with short walks on a level surface and gradually increase the distance and difficulty of your walks.
- **Tai chi:** Tai chi is a gentle form of exercise that can improve balance and coordination.
- **Yoga:** Yoga can also improve balance and coordination.

Vestibular Rehabilitation Exercises Videos:

Beginner: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drRwAdjZ644&t>

Intermediate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-syNzqslsyM4&t>

Prevention

- There is no known way to prevent vestibular neuronitis. However, you may be able to reduce your risk of developing the condition by:
- **Avoid Upper Respiratory Infections:** Encourage frequent hand washing, avoiding close contact with people who have colds or the flu, and considering vaccinations to reduce the risk of viral infections that can trigger vestibular issues.
- **Manage Stress:** Chronic stress can compromise immune function, so incorporating stress management techniques (like exercise, mindfulness, or adequate sleep) may help reduce vulnerability to infections.
- **Maintain a Balanced Diet:** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can support immune health and reduce the risk of infections.
- **Stay Hydrated and Active:** Both hydration and regular physical activity help support circulation and overall balance.

Outlook / Prognosis

The outlook for vestibular neuronitis is generally good. Most people recover completely within a few weeks or months. However, some people may experience residual dizziness or imbalance for a longer period of time. It is important to follow your doctor's instructions and to do your home exercises regularly to help improve your recovery. If you have any concerns about your condition, please talk to your doctor.