

Patient Guide Dizziness and Balance Disorders



Balance

ENT

™

EAR, NOSE & THROAT
ASSOCIATES, P.C.

Practicing Excellence.

Setting the Standard.

Balance

Dizziness, often called “vertigo” by doctors, is a very common complaint, accounting for 11 million doctor visits per year. Dizziness can occur in children, adults, and the elderly.

Dizziness is a symptom, not a disease. It can be caused by any one of dozens of disorders. Discovering the cause of dizziness is the first step in finding the best treatment.

ENT Balance is a state-of-the-art facility for the assessment and treatment of dizziness and balance problems. ENT Balance has a dual purpose:

- to aid the physician in the diagnosis of vertigo and balance disorders
- to provide customized physical therapy programs which reduce dizziness symptoms and improve balance and walking

ENT Balance also offers a Fall Prevention program for the elderly, and assistance with weight shifting training in the use of artificial legs.

The Balance System helps us to stand and walk. It uses information from three senses;

- vision
- proprioception (sensors in muscles and joints which sense pressure)
- the vestibular system (organs in the inner ear which detect movement)

Dizziness, unsteadiness and disorientation can be caused by problems in:

- any one of the three senses
- the brain's integration of the information from the three senses
- the nerves and muscles which help us stand and walk

Balance Testing evaluates each of the three senses, and examines how well the body uses the information to help you stand steadily and walk.

Vision is tested by examining the speed and accuracy of eye movements as you watch a moving light.

Proprioception and balance are tested by measuring how steadily you can stand when the floor moves slightly under your feet or when objects are moving nearby. During this test you will wear a safety harness so that you cannot fall.

The vestibular system is tested by recording eye movement patterns. These patterns may be seen when the balance organs are stimulated by movements (such as moving your head, turning from side to side while sitting in a chair, laying down or rolling over), or by warming or cooling the ear slightly with water or air.

Integration is tested by performing more than one activity at a time, such as watching a moving light while the head is moving, or standing with eyes closed.

Testing is not difficult or painful, though it at times might make you feel dizzy for a minute or two. We will be happy to give you breaks during the testing if needed.

Balance testing can help the doctor decide if the problem is due to peripheral (inner ear) or central (brain) disease. The testing can also identify walking problems. These tests help your doctor make a diagnosis and choose the best treatment.

Treatments can include any combination of dietary changes, medication, surgery, and/or Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy (“balance therapy”). Treatment varies from one patient to another, depending on the cause of the symptoms.

A Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy program is used to help the body recover from injury to the balance system and to eliminate dizziness that may occur during movement and activity. The exercise program is designed by a physical therapist who has had special training and experience in treating balance problems. The therapist determines what kinds of movements and activities bring on the symptoms and whether or not there are any difficulties walking or maintaining balance. The patient is given an exercise program designed to work on those movements which bring on symptoms, and if needed, to improve balance.

Balance exercises are usually done for 5 to 15 minutes per day with followup visits to the therapist every 1 - 2 weeks. Most patients can do their exercises at home. A few patients will work with the therapist several days per week in order to prevent falls.

A Team Approach

The ENT Balance team includes professionals with skills in neurotology, audiology, balance diagnostics, and balance therapy. Our approach is modeled after balance programs found at large teaching hospitals. It combines feedback and collaboration among various disciplines within the ENT Balance Team and the referring doctor in order to maximize patient care.

Thomas E. Boismier, MPH, is Director of the Balance Care Center. Prior to joining ENT Associates in 1997 to develop the Center, he spent 10 years as the assistant director of the Vestibular Testing Center at University of Michigan. He has an extensive clinical and research background in vestibular science. He has taught balance testing to professionals nationwide and abroad, including a teaching secondment in Addenbrooke's Hospital at Cambridge University in England.

Wendy Wierzbowski, PT, is our Chief Balance Therapist. She has practiced for over 13 years in balance therapy. She has experience working to improve gait and balance in patients with amputations, strokes and other movement disorders. All of our balance physical therapists have advanced training and practice exclusively in this specialized field. All of our physical therapists have earned a competency certificate in vestibular rehabilitation therapy from a nationally recognized training program.

Julie Hall, RN, FNP, MSN is our nurse practitioner teamed with Dr. Disher. She is trained in neurology and headache management. Both dizziness and headache problems can sometimes be caused by the same underlying disorder. It is important to be able to address both of these concerns.

Ear Nose & Throat Associates, PC

Ear, Nose and Throat Associates, PC is a medical practice of board-certified physicians and surgeons specializing in otolaryngology and neurotology medical care and surgery. Whether we are treating children or adults, our approach is one of care and concern for the patient. Our staff of licensed clinicians and experienced office professionals remains committed to you and your health.



Patient Referrals

The Balance Care Center is an open-referral service, which means that doctors can refer their patients for any combination of diagnostic testing, medical consult or balance therapy. To schedule an appointment, or to learn more about our services, please call our office at (260) 426-8117, ext 238.

Our Physicians

William M. Culp, MD
John E. Westfall, MD
Thomas W. Dumas, MD
David W. Stein, MD
John H. Fallon, MD
Mohan K. Rao, MD
Cynthia L. Wellman, MD
Douglas A. Nuckols, MD
Thomas W. Herendeen, MD
Stephen J. Schreck, MD
Deepkaran K. Reddy, MD
Amy L. Lai, MD
Adam R. Kaiser, MD
Brian D. Herr, MD

Nurse Practitioners:

Valerie Stucky, RN, FNP, MSN
Julie Hall, RN, FNP, MSN

Our Office Locations

With a variety of office and clinic locations throughout the region, we are here to meet your needs.

Dupont Office

(CT Scanner location)
10021 Dupont Circle Ct.
Fort Wayne, IN 46825

Lutheran Medical Park

7926 W. Jefferson Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46804

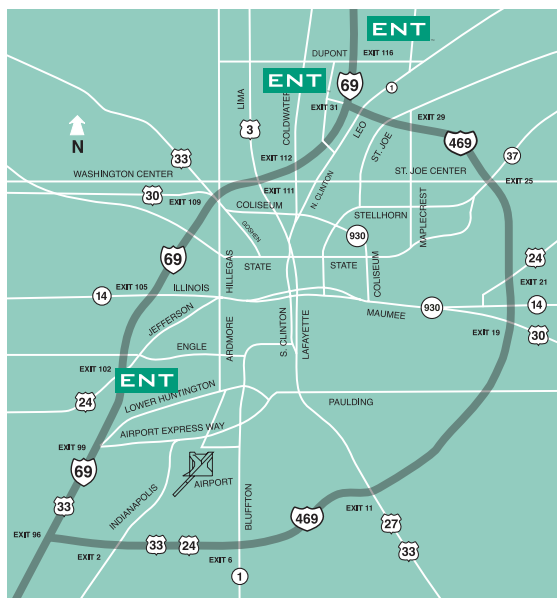
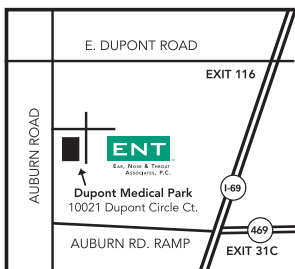
Parkview North Campus

11141 Parkview Plaza Dr.
Building 3, Suite 210
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

ENT Surgery Center

7900 W. Jefferson, Bldg. 1, Suite 102
Fort Wayne, IN 46804

www.entfortwayne.com



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