

PATIENT'S GUIDE TO EVALUATING VESTIBULAR PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

There is strong evidence supporting vestibular physiotherapy for reducing symptoms, improving gaze and postural stability, and improving function in individuals with vestibular dysfunction. Choosing a qualified physiotherapist can help ensure positive outcomes. Here are some tips for evaluating the qualifications of a physiotherapist.

TRAINING

Do they have vestibular certifications and substantial post-graduate training in vestibular rehabilitation (beyond a basic 2-day weekend introductory course)?

CLINICAL PRACTICE

1. Does the clinic focus on vestibular patients?
2. Do they communicate with a multidisciplinary team of vestibular specialists that includes a ENTs, neurologists, audiologists, psychologists?
3. Do they follow the clinical practice guidelines for BPPV and Vestibular Hypofunction?

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Are they are a member of vestibular disorder special interest groups dedicated to developing vestibular knowledge and skills?

INITIAL VISIT

Proper assessment takes time. Is the length of your initial visit at least one hour long? Do they provide you with one-on-one treatments, or is there attention split across several different patients in different rooms?

PERSONAL STYLE

Do you feel like this person genuinely cares about your well-being? Are they empathetic to the impact your vestibular symptoms have had on your daily life? Are they committed to helping you find a diagnosis, whether it is through their own practice or by referring you to another specialist?

EXPERIENCE

How long has the physiotherapist been working primarily with vestibular patients or what portion of their patients are vestibular?

A COMPLETE EXAM SHOULD INCLUDE:

1. History: They should ask questions about the timing of your symptoms, activities that trigger dizziness, and your previous dizziness history and treatment. They should be familiar with questionnaire to rate your dizziness symptoms, such as the Dizziness Handicap Inventory.
2. Ocular motor (eye movement) exam: They should look at your eye movements and tie the findings to possible diagnoses.
3. Walking and balance: They should perform standardized tests to measure your walking and balance abilities. Commonly used measures include the Functional Gait Assessment, Dynamic Gait Index, and/or 10-meter walk test.

EQUIPMENT

Do they have a way to evaluate eye movements with visual fixation prevented (e.g. Infrared goggles or Frenzel lenses)?



CONTACT VEDA

1.800.837.8428 | info@vestibular.org | vestibular.org