

Staff Expertise in Vestibular Disorders



What is a vestibular disorder?

People with vestibular (inner ear/balance) disorders often experience problems with vertigo, dizziness, spatial orientation, visual disturbance, and/or imbalance. These symptoms can occur from a peripheral vestibular disorder, a dysfunction of the balance organs in the inner ear, or a central vestibular disorder, a dysfunction of one or more parts of the central nervous system that help process balance and spatial information. Secondary symptoms can include nausea and/or vomiting, reduced ability to focus or concentrate, headaches and fatigue.

Why should I seek treatment?

The symptoms of a vestibular disorder can diminish quality of life and impact all aspects of daily living including independence and ability to work. They can also contribute to anxiety and depression. To avoid bringing on, or worsening, dizziness or imbalance problems people will often become more sedentary. Getting the right diagnosis and therapy for your condition and symptoms can significantly improve quality of life.

If you are unsure about seeking medical help ask yourself these questions:

- Do I feel unsteady?
- Do I feel as if the room is spinning around me?
- Do I feel as if I am moving when I know I'm sitting or standing still?
- Do I lose my balance and fall?
- Do I feel as if I am falling?
- Do I feel lightheaded or as if I might faint?
- Do I have blurred vision?
- Do I ever feel disoriented, such as losing my sense of time or where I am?

What is Vestibular Rehab Therapy (VRT)?

VRT is a specialized form of therapy that is performed by a certified physical therapist that is intended to alleviate both the primary and secondary problems caused by vestibular disorders. It is an exercise-based program primarily designed to reduce vertigo and dizziness, gaze instability, and/or imbalance or falls. VRT is customized to address your specific problem with the goal of promoting compensation. Compensation techniques teach the brain to use other senses (vision and body sense) as a substitute for the deficient vestibular system. The three principle methods of exercise can be prescribed include habituation, gaze stabilization and/or balance training. While some vestibular deficits are permanent, VRT can help you feel and function much better. An important part of VRT is establishing an exercise program that can be performed regularly at home.



Advanced Training and Experience



What happens during an evaluation or assessment?

Our specially trained Vestibular Rehab Therapists will first perform a thorough evaluation to assess your individual situation. We will collect a detailed history of your symptoms and how they affect your life as well as medication information, hearing or vision problems, history of falls, activity level, and so forth. Our therapist will then administer different tests including screening your visual and vestibular systems. Other tests will assess muscle strength, range of motion, coordination, posture, balance and walking. A customized plan is then developed based on the clinical assessment. Your therapist can also help explain the science behind your vestibular problem and how it relates to your daily functioning.

Do you have specialized equipment to aid in diagnosis and treatment?

Gaylord staff use VNG Goggles and vHit for precise, objective measurement while treating for vestibular issues.

Do I have to be diagnosed by my doctor before coming for an evaluation?

No. If you exhibit symptoms, you can self refer or be referred by your physician. In either case, once an evaluation, diagnosis and treatment plan is complete we will notify your physician and keep him or her informed of our findings and your progress.

About Gaylord



Vestibular Rehab is available
at our main campus:

**Gaylord Hospital &
Gaylord Outpatient Services**
50 Gaylord Farm Road
Wallingford, CT 06492

Making a Referral

- ▶ Patients can self refer using Connecticut's Direct Access for their physical therapy benefits by calling the number below.
- ▶ Physicians referring a patient for Outpatient Services can use our Gaylord Outpatient Referral Form.
- ▶ Gaylord Services can be integrated into e-ordering systems. Ask your Outpatient Regional Manager for more information.
- ▶ Gaylord accepts most commercial insurances as well Medicare and Medicaid

To schedule an evaluation, call (203) 284-2888:
Choose option 1 at the first prompt and then option 1 again.

To FAX a referral, use (203) 294-8705

Appointment requests available online at:
outpatientscheduling@gaylord.org.