

Dizziness and Balance Program



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Dizziness and Balance Program

The Dizziness and Balance Program at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital is a collaborative program between physicians*, healthcare providers and licensed physical therapists to help patients with balance disorders, dizziness, a history of falling or walking problems. They are dedicated to the treatment and management of dizziness and related balance safety concerns so patients can return to an independent lifestyle.

Dizziness symptoms

There are many things that can cause dizziness. The important thing is to recognize the symptoms and talk with your physician about getting the cause identified and the disorder treated.

The following are some of the more common dizziness symptoms:

Unsteadiness or imbalance when walking

Vertigo/dizziness

Nausea

Inability to concentrate

* In the spirit of keeping you well-informed, some of the physician(s) and/or individual(s) identified, are neither agents nor employees of Northwestern Memorial HealthCare or any of its affiliates. They have selected our facilities as places where they want to treat and care for their private patients.

Common dizziness symptoms (continued):

Difficulty reading

Sensitivity to noise and bright lights

Muscular aches in the neck and back

Fatigue

Loss of stamina

Commonly treated dizziness and balance diagnoses

The sensation of dizziness can be debilitating for individuals if left undiagnosed or untreated. Too often, people dismiss the symptoms or are afraid to get a diagnosis when, in fact, most are treatable. For example, one very common cause of dizziness is benign positional paroxysmal vertigo (BPPV). People with BPPV feel like they are spinning when they move or turn their head. Once diagnosed, our physical therapists are able to treat the disorder by using repositioning techniques and special Frenzel goggles to reorient the vestibular system. Most patients with BPPV symptoms feel significant improvement after three to five therapy sessions and often with additional therapy the symptoms can be completely alleviated.

Referral and evaluation

Once you receive a prescription from your physician for a dizziness and balance assessment, you can set up an appointment for a comprehensive evaluation consisting of clinical and/or computerized tests and measures. One of the tests you might be given is Computerized Dynamic Posturography (CDP) that assesses balance difficulties caused by a peripheral or central equilibrium disease. CDP testing is done using a Smart EquiTest® system that

performs computerized evaluations of your posture and balance under conditions replicating daily activities.

You also might require further assessment from other members of our collaborative team that could include:

Audiological evaluation

Computerized Dynamic Posturography (CDP)

Electromyography (EMG)

Electronystagmography (ENG)

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Neuropsychological evaluation and treatment

Diagnosis and treatment

A physical therapist works one-on-one with you through your treatment course and updates your referring physician on your progress. Treatment may vary depending upon your symptoms, general health, physical exam and evaluation results.

Following the assessment:

A customized treatment plan is created to help you achieve your lifestyle goals

Education is provided to help prevent falls and maintain safe mobility function

A specific home exercise program is created to increase balance confidence, strength, range of motion and coordination

Sessions are scheduled one to three times per week, averaging four to eight weeks in duration dependent upon the patient's progress

Other diagnoses that can be treated in the Dizziness and Balance Program include:

- Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo
 - Disorders affecting the central vestibular pathways
 - Dizziness
 - Labrynthitis
 - Meniere's disease/endolymphatic hydrops
 - Migraines
 - Perilymph fistula
 - Status post orthopaedic surgeries affecting the hips, knees, ankles and spine
 - Traumatic brain injury
 - Unsteadiness or imbalance when walking
 - Vertigo
 - Vestibular deficits in children with developmental disorders
 - Visual motor disturbances
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Referral Information

In order to be referred to the Dizziness and Balance Program at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital, you must have a physician's* order/referral.

Physicians should provide the following information on the order:

Write the order to read: Physical Therapy Evaluation and Treat

Fax the order to 630.933.2684 or call 630.933.6293 with questions

For patients referred to the Dizziness and Balance Program

Call 630.933.6293 to schedule the first visit; TTY for the hearing impaired 630.933.4833

Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the appointment time on the first visit to complete registration paperwork

The Dizziness and Balance Program is available at several locations in the western suburbs including Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital

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