

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Document history

Authors	Audiological Scientist
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	01223 217797
Publish/Review date	March 2011/March 2014
File name	Vestibular_Assessment._V2doc
Version number/Ref	2/PIN2392

Audiology Department

Patient Information

Vestibular Assessment

This leaflet is for vestibular (or balance) assessment patients. It explains what a vestibular assessment involves and tells you what you need to do before you come for your appointment.

What does vestibular assessment involve?

You will be seen by a clinical audiologist for an appointment of up to 1¾ hours. These clinicians are not medical doctors; they are audiologists who specialise in the assessment and management of hearing and vestibular (or balance) problems. The testing carried out is partly dependent on the individual patient case but is likely to involve:

- Questions about your dizziness and/or balance problem, and your general medical history.
- Assessment of your standing balance.
- Assessment of any abnormal eye movements on lying down quickly on the couch.
- Assessment of your eye movements when looking at or following a target and when lying on the couch in different positions, including wearing a 'goggles headset' that video records your eye movements.
- Assessment of the balance function in each ear by introducing warm and cool water or air into one ear at a time and measuring your eye movements.

After testing, the audiologist will explain the results to you, speak to you about any management they can offer, and will write a full report back to your referring consultant.

Benefits

Vestibular assessment involves a thorough, scientific assessment of a patient's vestibular (or balance) function. It often provides information to the medical specialist that is additional to their examination in clinic.

Risks

Some tests may make you feel dizzy but the audiologist will warn you when this might be the case. There is a slight chance that you may feel unsteady after your appointment.

Alternatives

If a vestibular assessment is not carried out the medical specialist will base your management on their history and examination in the clinic and other diagnostic tests as appropriate.

Before you come for your assessment:

- As there is a slight chance you may feel unsteady, if possible try to arrange for someone else to drive you home.
- Please refrain from wearing make-up around the eyes as this can interfere with the recording of your eye movements. Eye make-up may need to be removed.
- Please refrain from drinking alcohol for 48 hours prior to your appointment as this can influence testing.
- Please stop any medications for dizziness or any anti-histamine medication at least 48 hours prior to your appointment as these too can influence testing.
- If you have contact lenses then please wear these in preference to glasses.

Contacts/Further information

For further information please telephone 01223 217797 to speak to a Vestibular Audiologist.