



Our Mission

"To provide outstanding, progressive care in a nurturing environment that prioritizes individual treatment, with accountability to standard of care; where rehabilitation, fitness, performance and an overall healthy lifestyle contributes to best serving our patients and the community."

Reminder:

We offer free 15-minute consultations to any new patient, to discuss specific injuries.

In the Next Issue:

Part Two on "Nutritional Strategies for Training and Competition" will be highlighted in the next issue.

Performance Physical Therapy/ (970) 493-8727/ www.performance-physicaltherapy.com

PPT Welcomes New Members to the Team

Barb Allan, PT, is the newest physical therapist to join our team. Barb went to physical therapy school at University of New England in Biddeford, ME graduating in 1990. In addition to general orthopedics, she has training in vestibular rehab (dizziness) and women's health including urinary incontinence and pelvic pain. Outside of work, she enjoys riding her bike and skiing.

Gonda Dragan, a former patient of PPT, was extremely pleased with her care, and when she was offered the position of Marketing Director, she jumped at the chance. Gonda was born in Germany and has lived throughout the US. She

has four grown children and eight grandchildren, who are the smartest kids on the planet! In her spare time, she likes to swim, bike and run. She has competed in the 70.3 World Championship in Clearwater, Florida and Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii. She would like to do another Ironman and knows some awesome physical therapists to see her through the months of training.

In addition to her work in our billing department, **Linda Walker**, Patient Representative, is here to assist you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your therapy, billing or insurance, call Linda for help.

Got Dizziness? Get Help!!

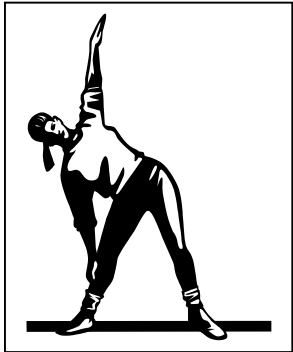
By DeeAnn Geu Vink, PT

Good news, there is help for dizziness or feeling wobbly on your feet! Working with a physical therapist who has a special knowledge of vestibular rehabilitation can significantly improve your symptoms. Do you have problems with riding in a car? Walking down the aisles of a grocery store? Changing or limiting activities because it does not feel comfortable? You can do a simple self check to tell if your balance is what it should be. Can you stand from a dining chair without using your hands? If you close your eyes do you remain still? Can you stand on one foot for 10 seconds without swaying? Can you turn your head side

to side while continuing to walk forward? If you answered no to any of these questions your balance may be compromised.

Dizziness is a big health issue that affects your ability to move and function, and can cause digestive upsets, decreased energy levels and affect emotional status. Dizziness can be caused by viral infections, head trauma, motor vehicle accidents, stroke, aging, migraines, increased muscle tension in the neck and shoulders, inner ear dysfunction, drug interactions, low blood pressure, anxiety and sensory loss in the lower legs.

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Got Dizziness? Get Help!! *Continued from Page 1*

“Once a possible cause for the dizziness is found, and medical treatments started, then physical therapy can help with diminishing the symptoms that remain.”



Dizziness and balance problems account for 5 to 10 percent of all physician visits and affect 40 percent of people over the age of 40. Dizziness is the number one reason for physician visits by people over the age of 65. The term dizziness can mean anything from vertigo to loss of balance to lightheadedness. It is important to see your physician for help in sorting out the various causes of dizziness and to see if your medications or activities are part of the problem.

After evaluation, if there is no change in how you are feeling, a visit to a physical therapist that has additional training in vestibular problems is the next step.

Treatment for balance or dizziness can involve positioning to allow the inner ear to adapt, or head and eye exercises to improve the coordination of information sent to the brain. Muscle strengthening of the legs and trunk and use of manual therapy techniques can help to reduce falls. Treatment includes visits to physical therapy, home exercise programs and time for the nervous system to adapt to each new challenge. Generally visits are weekly for six to eight weeks, with improvement within two weeks. Treatment can bring increased understanding of what is happening, decreasing the fear of movement and eliminating the avoidance of activities.

Our ability to maintain balance and move is managed by a complex system of sensory input to the brain and spinal cord and messages to the muscles on how to change our body position to keep us upright and moving. Most of what happens is an automatic function, like breathing. The eyes send pictures to the brain to tell how the body is positioned or if we are moving. The inner ear sends similar messages of movement of the head, of the body or changes in position. Our muscles also send messages

regarding the activity of each muscle in the body. The brain takes in all of this information and sends out signals to the muscles throughout the body on how to make adjustments to keep us on our feet or performing activity. All of this happens at reflex speed without us thinking about it. We get to think about walking or running down a path, playing soccer or basketball or even working at the computer without worrying about falling over!

Then something happens, suddenly or over time, and we have to concentrate on how we are moving. We can feel sick, the room spins, and we want to hold onto the furniture or walls. Things as simple as getting dressed, taking the dog for a walk, or getting groceries become major challenges. To sort out what happened is a team effort. Your vision should be checked to make sure your eyes are working appropriately and your glasses are the right strength and fit. A review of your medications, a check of your blood pressure and other health concerns needs to be addressed by your family physician. There are special tests, usually performed by a physician specializing in the ears, to determine if your inner ear is functioning as it should. Once a possible cause for the dizziness is found, and medical treatments started, then physical therapy can help with diminishing the symptoms that remain. There are many ways to help you cope with how you feel. Exercises to strengthen weak muscles to improve your body's ability to move, therapy techniques to decrease muscle tension in your neck and shoulders to change the message your brain receives or working to improve the reflex circuits between your inner ear, your eyes and muscles with your brain, can all help to improve how you feel and to keep you on your feet and moving through life.

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Got Dizziness? Get Help!! *Continued from Page 2*

Don't just "live with it" get help. Do not let a sudden dizziness end your lifestyle as you know it. Do not assume that as you age you need to accept that you must move slower and participate in fewer

activities. Activities may need to be adapted, but you do not have to "give up" your lifestyle because you do not feel safe to stand and move. Investigate your options and keep moving!

**Balance Self Test**

To help determine if you may be headed for a fall, take the Balance Self Test below. If you answer yes to one or more of the questions, you could be at risk. The best way to determine if you have a problem, though, is to talk with your physician who might recommend that you get a balance screening test from a qualified physical therapist.

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. Have you fallen more than once in the past year? | Yes | No |
| 2. Do you take medicine for two or more of the following diseases: heart disease hypertension, arthritis, anxiety, or depression? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you feel dizzy or unsteady if you make sudden changes in movement such as bending down or quickly turning? | Yes | No |
| 4. Do you have black-outs or seizures? | Yes | No |
| 5. Have you experienced a stroke or other neurological problem that has affected your balance? | Yes | No |
| 6. Do you experience numbness or loss of sensation in your legs and/or feet? | Yes | No |
| 7. Do you use a walker or wheel chair, or do you need assistance to get around? | Yes | No |
| 8. Are you inactive? (Answer yes if you do not participate in a regular form of exercise, such as walking or exercising 20-30 minutes at least three times a week.) | Yes | No |
| 9. Do you feel unsteady when you are walking, climbing stairs? | Yes | No |
| 10. Do you have difficulty sitting down or rising from a seated or lying position? | Yes | No |

**Performance
Physical Therapy**

Get Results!!

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**Suggested Websites/
Bibliography**

www.theprrt.com

www.vestibular.org

www.muscleactivation.com

View video of MAT and PRRT
techniques on our website!

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.performance-physicaltherapy.com

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