



HEALTH INFORMATION

Vertigo

What is Vertigo?

Vertigo is a symptom rather than a condition itself. It's the sensation that you, or the environment around you, is moving.

If you have vertigo, you may feel as if you're moving even when you're standing completely still.

Other symptoms of vertigo include:

- feeling sick
- vomiting
- difficulty standing

The symptoms of vertigo can be barely noticeable or so severe that the loss of balance prevents you from performing everyday tasks.

Depending on the cause, an episode of vertigo may last several seconds, minutes, hours or day.

What causes Vertigo?

Vertigo is commonly caused by a problem with the balance mechanisms in the inner ear. However, it can also be caused by problems in certain parts of the brain.

Possible causes of vertigo include:

- **Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo** where certain head movements trigger vertigo
- **Ménière's disease** a condition that also causes tinnitus and hearing loss

- **Migraines**
- **Vestibular neuronitis** – inflammation of the vestibular nerve which runs into the inner ear and sends messages to the brain that help control balance.

Treatments

Mild vertigo is common and not usually serious.

However, vertigo that reoccurs or persists may be caused by an underlying health condition.

Without establishing what's causing your vertigo and receiving appropriate treatment, you may keep having episodes of vertigo for many months or even years.

See your GP if you have recurrent or persistent vertigo. They'll be able to confirm or rule out a more serious cause and recommend appropriate treatment, which may include:

- **Medication**
- **Vestibular rehabilitation** a special exercise programme that encourages your brain to adapt to the abnormal messages sent from your ears.

