

Dizziness By Dr Holmes for CTV Mid-Life Matters Dec 15

There are two problems that appear on a doctors day sheet that make you sigh and you realize that once again, you are going to get behind, causing other patients to wait. One is tiredness and the other is dizziness.

These are common complaints and they are complicated to diagnose. At one time or another 5 – 10 % of people will complain of dizziness, imbalance or vertigo. About 40% of people over age 40 will experience this. As we get older, dizziness is associated with loss of balance, falls and injuries. The older we get, the more vague the history and the more likely it could be from a neurological or cardiac cause. The younger we are, the more specific the complaints, making it easier to diagnose.

Dizziness may be feeling lightheaded, faint or unsteady. If there is a sensation of movement, spinning, and especially if associated with tinnitus or hearing loss, it is more likely that it is related to the inner ear.

It is important to have the cause properly diagnosed. Of course we need to rule out cardiac, neurological, or metabolic causes by doing the appropriate examination and work up. When vertigo is involved I feel it is essential to be referred to a **vestibular physiotherapist**. They can do a very sophisticated examination to differentiate the causes of vertigo. If you are lucky you will have Benign Paroxysmal Positional vertigo, a condition where you have vertigo precipitated by movement in a specific direction. The physical therapist can reposition the crystals in the inner ear and you can be treated. Physical therapists can help diagnose Meniere 's disease, vestibular migraine, and other causes.

It is too complicated to mention all the causes of dizziness but I will have a couple of excellent websites for you to check out.

The basic message - have your dizziness checked out, book extra time with your family physician to do this. Dizziness is an important sign of several possible causes/conditions that need to be explored!

Web sites:

<http://vestibular.org/>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dizziness/basics/causes/CON-20023004>

http://www.emedicinehealth.com/dizziness/article_em.htm

I Feel Dizzy Doctor

http://www.ifponline.com/index.php?id=21643&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=446921&tx_ttnews%5BsViewPointer%5D=5&cHash=2f5c9dcf23708bd0e1d94438b1d07c1e