

Ménière's Disease

Ménière's Disease is a progressive condition of the inner ear causing episodes of dizziness. Typically, patients experience episodes comprising the following symptoms:

- Sudden dizziness (lasting minutes-hours)
- Fluctuating hearing
- Fluctuating tinnitus (sounds that you can hear but no-one else can, commonly "ringing" or humming)
- Fullness or pressure

Some patients also experience general imbalance, sensitivity to loud sounds, distorted hearing in the affected ear and 'drop attacks' (falling to the floor with sudden, intense dizziness).

What causes Ménière's Disease?

The underlying cause of Ménière's Disease is not known for certain. There are different theories, however most specialists think it is caused by an excessive build-up of inner ear fluid. It usually occurs in only one ear, although some people develop Ménière's Disease in both ears.

How is Ménière's Disease diagnosed?

Most commonly, an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist is responsible for diagnosing Ménière's Disease or other conditions related to dizziness and/or imbalance. As part of your diagnosis they might:

- Ask you to describe your symptoms in detail
- Examine you in the ENT clinic
- Have your hearing tested
- Refer you for further assessment of the balance system

What treatment options are available for Ménière's Disease

Treatment of Ménière's disease is aimed at reducing and controlling symptoms. Treatment will vary with the needs of each individual and may include medication, vestibular rehabilitation, diet and lifestyle changes, tinnitus management, hearing aids and counselling.

Diet

You are likely to be advised to reduce your caffeine and salt intake.

Medication

Betahistine (Serc) is the most commonly used medication for Ménière's Disease and is often highly successful in managing symptoms. Some patients also benefit from a medication such as Buccastem that is intended to reduce dizziness, nausea and/or vomiting during the severe attacks only.

Vestibular Rehabilitation

Exercises may be suitable for some patients. The patients who may see benefit are those who experience dizziness with certain head movements and/or those who experience constant imbalance, but who are **not** having frequent 'spontaneous' attacks of dizziness.

Some patients may also benefit from breathing control exercises, as anxiety may go hand-in-hand with Ménière's Disease and can often make symptoms worse.

Patients experiencing tinnitus, that is either preventing them from sleeping and/or is very bothersome, may benefit from information on tinnitus management. Ask your Audiologist or Ear, Nose and Throat surgeon for an appointment in the Tinnitus Clinic.

All patients are likely to benefit from an improved understanding of their Ménière's Disease, ways to manage it and what to expect in the future.

Surgical procedures

Surgical procedures may be considered as a last resort if other treatments have been unsuccessful in controlling severe symptoms. Your ENT specialist will discuss the options with you if this becomes necessary.

How will my Ménière's Disease progress?

In the beginning, you will probably notice that you return to feeling fairly normal between 'attacks'. Over time, however, you may notice:

- Deteriorating and increasingly distorted hearing in the affected ear
- Increasing tinnitus in the affected ear
- Feeling more unstable on your feet
- Dizzy attacks may lessen as time progresses

The Ménière's Society

The Ménière's Society provides support and information to those affected by Ménière's Disease and other vestibular disorders and funds vital research into all aspects of these conditions.

Address: The Ménière's Society, The Rookery, Surrey Hills Business Park
Wotton, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6QT, UK

Website: <http://www.Ménières.org.uk/>

Telephone: 0845 120 2975

Local Groups: Norfolk, Ann Read: 01362 858110
Bedfordshire: Max Coleman: 01234 290598

Please contact Audiology if you are interested in setting up a group in the Huntingdon area.



This Information leaflet has been reviewed and approved by the Audiology Patient Panel. If you would like to get involved, please leave your contact details with a member of the reception staff.

If you require this leaflet in another format for example LARGE PRINT, Audio format or another language, please ask your audiologist, a member of reception, or contact the department

[Document History](#)

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