

Patient Information

Vestibular Assessment

INTRODUCTION

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.

THE BALANCE SYSTEM

In order to balance we use information from three main senses:

1. The balance organ in each inner ear (see Figure 1)
2. Vision
3. Proprioception or somatosensory inputs (sensors in your feet, muscles and joints)

Information from the three senses regarding the orientation of your head and body is sent via the balance nerve to your brain where the information is combined.

WHAT DOES VESTIBULAR ASSESSMENT INVOLVE?

You will be seen by a clinical audiologist for an appointment of up to 2 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 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.

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.

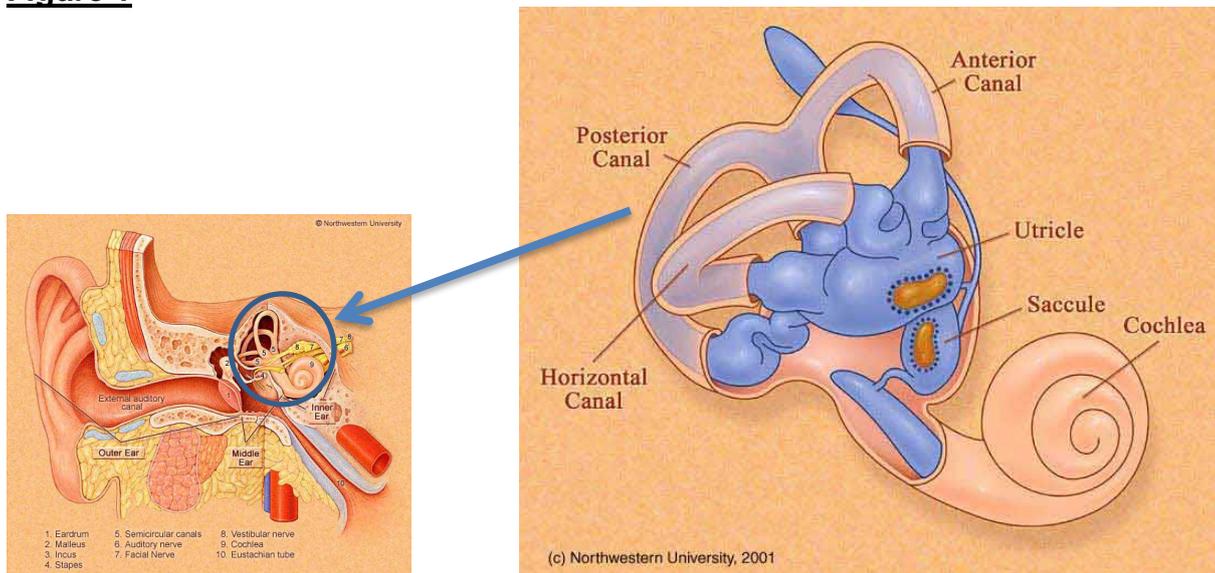
BEFORE YOU COME FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT:

- 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 the presence of alcohol in your body 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 any questions regarding medication, please contact us prior to the tests
- If you have contact lenses then please wear these in preference to glasses.

CONTACTS/FURTHER INFORMATION

Please contact the Audiology department on **01480 847465**

Figure 1



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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www.nwangliaft.nhs.uk/a-z-of-services/a/audiology/

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