



Balance Testing

Diagnostic Audiovestibular (DAV)



Why might I need a balance appointment?

You have been referred for vestibular (balance) function testing to investigate the cause of your dizziness, vertigo or imbalance. This leaflet explains what the tests will involve and what you need to do before attending your appointment. The appointment can last 90 minutes - 2 hours, please organise travel arrangements accordingly. NB: This appointment may be at our Southmead department.

Important information – please read carefully:

If you have any specialist communication requirements please inform us as soon as possible. We are happy to arrange interpretation services.

Your ears need to be completely free of wax. Your own GP surgery can usually check your ears and advise on wax removal. Please arrange this with your GP surgery at least 2 weeks before the appointment.

Avoid alcohol 24 hours before the appointment. Continue to take medications as prescribed by your doctor.

On the day of your appointment:

Do not wear any eye make-up, including mascara, eyeliner and eye-shadow, as this can interfere with the eye movement recording equipment.

Travel:

We recommend you bring someone with you to the appointment if possible. Please allow plenty of time for travel and parking. If you are late for your appointment we will be unable to see you and the appointment will be re-arranged.

It is advisable not to drive immediately after your tests so please allow extra time following your appointment.

Please be aware that failure to comply with any of the above requirements may mean re-arranging your appointment.

What is involved in vestibular function testing?

We will begin with asking you some questions about your dizziness or balance problems and will ask about your previous medical history. A blood pressure reading may be taken on the day. A range of balance function tests will then be performed to determine whether your dizziness originates from the balance organs in the inner ears. For most of these tests you will be asked to wear a pair of goggles with a camera attached to observe and record your eye movements. This is because there is a reflex linking your eye movements with the balance organs in the inner ears.

The tests we carry out will depend upon your symptoms and may include some or all of the following:

- Measuring your standing ability on a solid surface and an unsteady surface with your eyes open or closed.

Recording your eye movements:

- Whilst you view the motion of a small green light in front of you.
- When you are lying down, turning over or looking in different positions.
- During small, fast head movements.
- After a small amount of warm or cool water has been run into each ear canal in turn. In some instances air may be used instead of water.
- Measuring the muscle response in your neck while we play a loud sound with headphones.

What if I can't find the answer to my question in this leaflet?

If you have questions not answered by this leaflet please don't hesitate to contact us using the details at the top of this form. Our website hyperlink below takes you to our main hub Website; this site includes useful advice, information and videos. Or type: Audiology Bristol and select St. Michael's in a search engine.

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-hospitals/st-michaelshospital/what-we-do/audiology/>

We welcome any comments or feedback about your appointment and you can respond on this online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R7HZJKH> as this helps us make changes to support patient care. This document has been reviewed and agreed by the patient participation hearing group.

If you are late for your appointment, it may not be possible to see you and the appointment may need to be rearranged.