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Examination protocol in a dizzy patient

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A practical easy to do examination protocol while approaching a patient of vertigo to clarify – Type of Dizziness. Dizziness is a term to describe a number of different sensations, especially uncertainty of a position or motion. Dizziness is derived from "Dysig" meaning stupid. Dizziness is categorized into 5 types: Vertigo, disequilibrium, lightheadedness, floating (psychogenic) and motion sickness and is illusion of motion or spinning sensation. Vertigo is of two types: Subjective in which person feels the motion and Objective in which surroundings revolve and patient sees the motion. Imbalance is wobbling on your feet-loss of balance without abnormal sensation. Patient usually complains of feeling of unsteadiness/imbalance when standing/walking/turning –increased by uneven ground or turning. Fainting (Blackouts/ Presyncope) Usually due to cardiovascular e.g Postural Hypotension , Metabolic e.g. Hypoglycemia .Light headedness – Vague symptoms due to psychological cause, multisensory deficit etc. Motion Sickness – This is a mismatch between the visual and vestibular system. Commonly occurs with cars, boats and aero planes etc. When a patient approaches to vertigo clinic, for assessment First and foremost is to understand what patient means by dizziness-whether it is true vertigo or dizziness, type of Vertigo-- Central or Peripheral, then start ruling out the causes of dizziness and vertigo with special emphasis on examination of Vestibulo-ocular and Vestibulospinal reflexes – their relevance and their usefulness.

Biography

Sandeep Sharma has completed his MS in ENT from Baba Farid University of Health Sciences in India. He is the President of Institute of Vestibular Rehabilitation.

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