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Information regarding your appointment for Balance Assessment

Introduction

This information leaflet outlines the care that you will receive when you come to the Audiology Department for a Balance Assessment.

If you need any communication support, such as an interpreter, please contact the department and we will do our best to arrange this for you.

Your appointment will be with a fully qualified Audiologist who has experience in testing balance function. Please feel free to say during the appointment if you do not wish the tests to continue.

Important Information

We recommend that you do not drive for at least 20 minutes after your appointment. You may wish to arrange for someone to accompany you.

24 Hours before your appointment

- Stop taking medication prescribed to control your dizziness. Continue to take medication for other conditions as normal.
- Do not consume alcohol or recreational drugs.

On the day of the appointment:

- Do not wear eye make-up.
- Eat lightly (unless you are diabetic, in which case your normal diet is recommended).
- Dress comfortably.
- Tell us if you have taken medication which might make you drowsy.
- **During the course of the appointment, if there is anything that you are unsure about, please ask.**

During your first appointment

The Audiologist will ask you questions about your ears, your health and balance in order to understand the problems you have. It is important that you explain the reasons why you have come for an assessment so that the audiologist can adjust the appointment to your needs.

We will carry out all or some of the following tests:

1. Tests of Standing Balance

The Audiologist will watch you standing with your eyes open and closed, and with your feet on different surfaces.

2. Video Eye Recording

It is not possible to record information directly from the balance organs, which are deep inside your head. There is a reflex that connects your eyes and inner ears, so we often watch your eyes to find out about the inner ear balance. You will wear goggles with cameras to watch and record your eye movements.

3. Dix Hallpike test

This involves moving from sitting to lying down and then to sitting again. The Audiologist will support you while you are moving and will look at your eyes. This is used to look for a common type of dizziness called Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) and it may make you feel dizzy if you have BPPV. If we find that you have BPPV, we can offer treatment straight away.

After the appointment

- You may take any medication you have been prescribed for your dizziness.
- After the appointment, you may feel unsteady or tired, but you should be able to continue your normal routine.

Following your first appointment

We may recommend coming to the Audiology Department for further testing or treatment. You will be able to decide whether you are happy to go ahead with any further appointments.

We sometimes offer:

Hearing test

You will be asked to listen to sounds through headphones placed over your ears and respond when you hear them. The Audiologist can then assess the quietest sounds that you are able to hear.

Caloric test

This allows us to record eye movements that come from each inner ear, separately, and to compare them. During the test, you will be wearing goggles to record your eye movements and we will use water to warm or cool each ear in turn.

Vestibular Evoked Myogenic Potential (VEMP)

This allows us to record the muscle reactions that come from each inner ear, separately, and to compare them. It picks up different balance problems from the caloric test, and it can be used with people who cannot have water in their ears. During the test, you will hear loud clicking noises, while the computer records a muscle response in your neck.