

Audiology Department Patient Information



The Information Standard 

Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail pals@dchft.nhs.uk

If you wish to obtain a list of the sources used to develop this information leaflet please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk

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What to expect at a balance assessment appointment

What will happen at my appointment?

When you go to the Hospital you will be seen by a Clinical Scientist, who may be accompanied by a student. Your appointment will last up to 90 minutes.

We will ask you some questions about your balance problem, to try and get a better idea of what's been happening.

We will examine your ears and perform a quick test of your ear drums. This involves putting a soft tip into your ear for a few seconds. We may then undertake a positional test, which is looking for a very common type of dizziness. This test will involve you lying back on a couch. We will demonstrate what this involves.

Video goggles will be used to record your eye movements when following a target. Your brain moves your eyes in response to messages from your balance system, so by measuring the movement of your eyes we can see how well your eyes, brain and balance system are interacting.

The last test that we may do is called the caloric test. This involves putting a small amount of water into each of your ears to stimulate your balance organs. We can then tell how well the two sides are working together. This test may make you feel slightly dizzy, but this will only last for a very short time.

What will happen next?

The Clinical Scientist will write a report which will be passed on to your ENT Consultant. If you do not already have an appointment arranged you will receive an appointment to see them to discuss the results of the tests.

Should I bring somebody with me?

It is advisable to bring a friend or relative to drive you home.

What can I do to prepare for the appointment?

- 48 hours prior to the appointment you need to stop taking your usual balance (or vertigo) medication or any antihistamines. These medicines can influence the results of the tests. Examples of these medications include: betahistine (Serc®), cinnarizine (Stugeron®), cyclizine or prochlorperazine (Stemetil®).
- If you are stopping your usual balance medication, it is advisable that you do not drive to the appointment and arrange a friend or relative to drive you
- As there is a slight chance that you may feel unsteady following testing, if possible please arrange for someone else to drive you home.
- Please refrain from drinking alcohol for 48 hours prior to your appointment, as this can influence testing
- Please do not wear any eye makeup to your appointment, as this affects the quality of the recordings we make of your eye movements
- If you have contact lenses, then please wear these in preference to glasses
- We would be most grateful if you could complete the enclosed questionnaire and bring this with you to your appointment

Who should I contact if I need more information?

Please do not hesitate to contact the department if you have any questions on 01305 255563 or email audiology@dchft.nhs.uk