

Unilateral Vestibular Loss (UVL) Labrynthitis/Neuritis/Vestibular Hypofunction

The vestibular system contributes to our sense of balance and movement. Unilateral vestibular loss is a balance disorder, which can cause dizziness (vertigo), nausea and vomiting. It can cause you to lose your balance and sense of movement. It can occur at any age and can be caused by a virus which may damage or injure the balance nerve.

Labrynthitis is a form of UVL that causes injury to the balance and hearing systems in the inner ear. This can decrease your vestibular function and cause hearing loss on that one side.

Vestibular neuritis is a form of UVL that causes injury to the vestibular nerve. This causes a decrease in vestibular function on one side.

Bilateral vestibular loss (BVL) affects both ears. This is less common and causes more severe balance problems. Often patients with BVL do not have vertigo. A diagnosis of BVL requires vestibular testing by an ear specialist.

Treatment

Physical therapy treatments for UVL and BVL are based on your vertigo and balance test results. You may be taught exercises to reduce your dizziness or vertigo. At first, these exercises may make you feel dizzy, but this will lessen in time. Completing your exercises regularly will help speed up your recovery.

Recovery time is different for each person. It takes about six weeks to recover from neuritis and six months to recover from labrynthitis. It can take two years to reach your highest level of recovery if both ears are involved.