

Information Regarding your Appointment for Balance Assessment

Gwent Audiology Service

Introduction

This information leaflet outlines the care that you receive when you attend the Audiology Department for a balance assessment.

We assume you consent to these procedures being carried out when you attend the appointment, but please feel free to say during the appointment if you do not wish the tests to continue.

You are welcome to bring a friend or family member to your appointment.

If you require any communication support or interpreting services, please let us know and we will do our best to arrange this for you.

Your appointment is with a qualified audiologist who has experience in assessing the balance organs.

Important Information

Before your appointment:

- We recommend that you do not drive immediately after your appointment. You may wish for someone to accompany you.

48 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:

- Avoid wearing eye make-up, as this can affect some of our testing.

After the appointment

- You may take any medication that you have been prescribed for your dizziness.
- Occasionally, some people feel unsteady after their appointment, but after a short period you should be able to continue your normal routine.

During your appointment

We will ask you questions relating to your ears, your health and your balance in order to understand the problems that you are facing. It is important that you explain the reasons why you have come for an assessment so that we can tailor the appointment to your needs. We will also discuss the situations in which your balance is causing a problem. This information will help us decide how we can support you.

During your appointment, we will carry out all or some of the following test:

Tests of Standing Balance

We observe you standing with your eyes open and closed. At some appointments, these tests may be carried out by a physiotherapist

Eye Movement Assessment

It is not possible to record information directly from the balance organs because they are situated deep inside your head. Instead, we find out information about your balance organs from your eyes, because there is a link between them. We record eye movements using goggles that contain cameras.

For some of the tests we will ask you to look at lights, and for some you will have your eyes covered. If you are not able to wear the goggles, we can use sticky sensors placed on your face to record your eye movements instead.

Positioning Tests

This involves moving from sitting to lying down and then sitting again. Your audiologist will support you while you are moving and will look at your eyes when you have laid down. This is used to look for a common type of dizziness called Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo(BPPV). If we find that you have BPPV, we can recommend a treatment straight away.

Following your appointment, we may recommend returning to the Audiology Department for further testing. You will have the opportunity to decide whether you are happy to go ahead. This will usually be one of the following:

Hearing Assessment

We will ask you to listen to sounds through headphones placed over your ears and respond to them when you hear them. We can then assess the quietest sounds that you are able to hear.

Caloric Test

This allows us to record from the balance organ of each ear separately and to compare them to see if one is not working properly. During the test, we use water to warm or cool each ear in turn and record eye movements using goggles.

Vestibular-Evoked Myogenic Potential (VEMP) Test

This allows us to record from the balance organ of each ear separately and to compare them to see if one is not working properly. We can also use this test to check for weaknesses in the bony structures surrounding the balance organs. During the test, we play loud clicking noises in your ear, while we record a muscle reflex in your neck using sticky sensors.

During the course of your appointment, if there is anything that you are unsure about, please do not hesitate to ask.

**This document is available in Welsh /
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg**