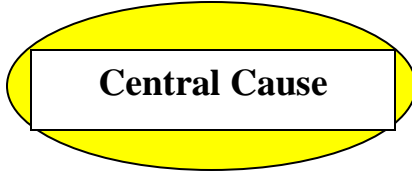
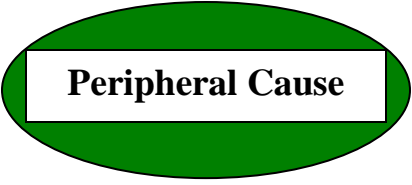


# The “DIZZY” Patient: Neurological Causes

“Can you describe your symptoms in any way other than dizzy?”



**VERTIGO:**  
False sense of motion, often described as rotational  
“I feel like I am spinning.” OR  
“The world is spinning around me.”

- Diplopia (The 4 Ds)
- Dysphagia
- Dysarthria
- Dysmetria
- Weakness
- Memory loss
- Visual field loss
- Loss of balance
- Tremors
- Rigidity

**DISEQUILIBRIUM:**  
Feeling of imbalance when standing or walking  
“I feel unsteady when I am up on my feet.”

**Subjective Findings**

- Patient can describe exact position of first episode
- Episodic // “Spinning”
- Moderate to severe
- Change in head position, head movement, or visual input
- May be associated with pressure, fullness or hearing loss (i.e. Meniere’s, labyrinthitis); “Voices sound distorted.”

**Essential History Questions for the “DIZZY” Patient**

**When did the symptoms begin?**

**Symptoms constant? // Describe**  
**How severe are the symptoms?**  
**What aggravates the symptoms?**

**Is there an associated hearing loss or other problems with the ear?**

**Subjective Findings**

- Gradual onset
- Constant // “Unsteady”
- Mild to moderate
- Standing or walking; may be “stirred-up” with head movement or closing eyes
- No definitive or predictable hearing loss

**Objective Findings**

- Vertical with torsion, or horizontal nystagmus
- Fatigues and adapts to the provoking position. Fixation ↓
- May have hearing loss: Meniere’s = ↓’d low freq. Labyrinthitis = ↓’d any freq.
- No **Neurological Red Flags**

**TESTS**

1. Head Impulse (Thrust) Test
2. Hallpike-Dix Maneuver

**Examination**

**What is the direction of the nystagmus?**  
**How does the nystagmus behave?**

**Is there associated hearing loss?**

**Any Neurological Red Flags?**

◀ **OBJECTIVE TESTS** ▶

Remember the **HINTS**: Head Impulse, Nystagmus, Test of Skew

**Objective Findings**

- Vertical, horizontal, rotary or combination nystagmus
- Does not fatigue or may ↑ with fixation. May reverse direction
- No definitive or predictable hearing loss.
- Often associated with **Neurological Red Flags**

**TESTS**

1. Smooth Pursuit
2. Saccades
3. Gaze Fixation