

## Fall Prevention and Vestibular Function Assessment

### **Q. What is a Vestibular Function Evaluation?**

**A.** A painless, non-invasive diagnostic evaluation through which we can determine if your balance, fall risk, vestibular or other associated conditions are due to a problem located in your central(brain) or peripheral nervous systems (balance system in your ear). Depending on the nature of your condition, and other symptoms present, a specific diagnosis may be obtained. The test results are of significant value to your physician, as well as, the physical and occupational therapists that may be treating you for your balance and vestibular disorders. The information obtained will greatly improve the clinician's ability to implement a program specifically targeted to your deficits.

### **Q. What is the function of the vestibular system?**

**A.** It is the system in the body that is responsible for maintaining [balance](#), [posture](#), and the body's orientation in space.

### **Q. Why am I being tested?**

**A. To prevent you from falling!** Vestibular impairments can cause symptoms such as vertigo, dizziness, unsteadiness, trouble walking properly, difficulty with maintaining balance in areas with a lot of visual stimuli, ringing of the ears, can cause an increase in falls and even migraine headaches. Your clinician may have identified some of these symptoms in your history and wishes to further evaluate how your vestibular and central nervous system are functioning so that you may be more accurately diagnosed and treated.

### **Q. What can I expect to experience during the test?**

**A.** This non-invasive procedure typically lasts 20-30 minutes and is made up of a series of brief tests lasting approximately 30 seconds each. During the exam the patient will be wearing a pair of lightweight, foam padded goggles. Inside the goggles is an infrared camera which is recording your eye movements which are later interpreted by a specially trained physician. For the first portion of the test the patient will be seated in front of a computer and asked to watch moving targets on the computer screen (see images below). The technician will then gently rotate the patients head from side to side and then up and down (this is done extremely gently and slowly). The next portion of the test will involve the patient lying on their back, left side and right side while keeping their eyes open while the camera records the eye. The last portion will also involve the patient lying down while the technician gently puts cool and then warm air into the ear.



### **Q. If I do have a problem with my balance system can I be helped?**

**A.** Yes you can. Through specialized rehabilitation exercises vestibular impairments can often be significantly improved, resulting in the alleviation of the many of the uncomfortable symptoms and outcomes that accompany balance deficits such as dizziness, vertigo and falls.

**CHIROPRACTIC CLINICS OF SOUTH FLORIDA**

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