Vertigo (Dizziness)

Your exam shows you have had an episode of dizziness or vertigo. Dizziness can be caused by many different problems. These include low blood pressure, narrowed blood vessels in the brain, neurologic and heart problems, low blood sugar, and emotional states. True vertigo causes a false sense of movement such as a spinning feeling or walls that seem to move. Vertigo is usually made worse by changing position and relieved by resting. This type of vertigo is often thought to be caused by a virus infection involving the inner ear, or rarely, an unusual migraine headache. The treatment of vertigo includes:

- **Bed rest and clear liquids.**
- **Medications to reduce dizziness, nausea, and vomiting.**
- **Avoid alcohol, tranquilizers, nicotine, caffeine, and recreational drugs.**

Most of the time benign vertigo is much better after 3 days. However, mild unsteadiness may last for up to 3 months in some patients. An MRI scan or other special tests to evaluate your hearing and balance may be needed if the vertigo does not improve or returns in the future. Please see your doctor at once or go to the emergency room if you have any of these warning signs:

- **Increasing vertigo, earache, ear drainage, or loss of hearing**.
- **Severe headache, blurred or double vision, or trouble walking.**
- **Fainting, extreme weakness, chest pain, or palpitations.**
- **Fever, persistent vomiting, or dehydration.**
- **Numbness or weakness of the limbs.**

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