Dizziness: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Dizziness is the feeling of unsteadiness or fuzziness in your head. It is different than having vertigo, which is a feeling that the room is spinning or that you are moving or falling. It is also different from lightheadedness, which is the feeling that you are about to faint.

It can be hard to know what causes dizziness. Some people feel dizzy when they have migraine headaches. Sometimes bouts of flu can make you feel dizzy. Some medical conditions, such as heart problems or high blood pressure, can make you feel dizzy. Many medicines can cause dizziness, including medicines for high blood pressure, pain, or anxiety.

If a medicine causes your symptoms, your doctor may recommend that you stop or change the medicine. If it is a problem with your heart, you may need medicine to help your heart work better. If there is no clear reason for your symptoms, your doctor may suggest watching and waiting for a while to see if the dizziness goes away on its own.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- If your doctor recommends or prescribes medicine, take it exactly as directed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine.
- Do not drive while you feel dizzy.
- Try to prevent falls. Steps you can take include:
  - Using nonskid mats, adding grab bars near the tub, and using night-lights.
  - Clearing your home so that walkways are free of anything you might trip on.
  - Letting family and friends know that you have been feeling dizzy. This will help them know how to help you.

When should you call for help?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You have dizziness along with symptoms of a heart attack. These may include:
  - Chest pain or pressure, or a strange feeling in the chest.
  - Sweating.
  - Shortness of breath.
  - Nausea or vomiting.
  - Pain, pressure, or a strange feeling in the back, neck, jaw, or upper belly or in one or both shoulders or arms.

    - Lightheadedness or sudden weakness.
    - A fast or irregular heartbeat.

- You have symptoms of a stroke. These may include:
    - Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of movement in your face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body.
    - Sudden vision changes.
    - Sudden trouble speaking.
    - Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements.
    - Sudden problems with walking or balance.
    - A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You feel dizzy and have a fever, headache, or ringing in your ears.
- You have new or increased nausea and vomiting.
- Your dizziness does not go away or comes back.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You do not get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to https://www.healthwise.net/patiented

Enter **Q823** in the search box to learn more about **"Dizziness: Care Instructions".**

©2006-2022 Healthwise, Incorporated.

This care instruction is for use with your licensed healthcare professional. If you have questions about a medical condition or this instruction, always ask your healthcare professional. Healthwise, Incorporated disclaims any warranty or liability for your use of this information.