
Balance assessment

You have been referred to the audiology department by an ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialist to have a balance assessment.

If there is a problem with one of our balance organs, it may cause dizziness or imbalance. During this appointment, an audiologist will carry out a series of tests to help us diagnose your symptoms.

Before the appointment

Please let us know if you need an interpreter for this appointment.

Please make sure your ears are clear of wax, to allow us to complete the procedures. Ask your GP or practice nurse to check your ears if you think wax may be present.

Before the test, please do not:

- take anti-dizziness medication or sedatives within 48 hours of your appointment. Please continue taking all other essential medications (check with your GP if you're unsure)
- drink alcohol or take recreational drugs within 48 hours of your appointment
- eat a heavy meal within 4 hours of your appointment

- wear eye makeup during the appointment, as this may affect the results

If you have done any of the above please tell your audiologist before the testing begins.

Some of the tests may make you feel dizzy for a short time so we advise you not to drive immediately after the test.

What shall I bring to the appointment?

- a spare top/shirt, in case clothes get wet during testing
- a list of the medication you take

How long is the appointment?

The appointment will last approximately 60-90 minutes.

What will happen in the appointment?

You will be asked about your medical history, balance and any associated symptoms. Each test will be fully explained to you during the appointment.

To start with, the following tests will be completed:

Pure tone audiometry

This test measures your hearing levels and is performed in a soundproof room.

The test takes 15-30 minutes.

Tympanometry

This is a quick pressure test lasting a few minutes, which gives us information about your eardrums.

One or more of the following tests will then be performed to test your balance function, depending on your history and symptoms:

Video head impulse test

During this test your head will be turned in different directions while wearing goggles to record eye movements. This test takes 5-10 minutes.

Vestibular-evoked myogenic potentials

Sticky pads will be placed around your eyes or forehead for this test, while clicking sounds are played into your ears. This will take 5-10 minutes.

Caloric test

For this test a small amount of water will be trickled into your ears while you're lying down. This will take approximately 20-40 minutes.

When will I get my results?

The results will usually be explained to you after testing is complete. In some cases, results may need to be reviewed by an ENT specialist. If this needs to happen we will contact you with the outcome.

Contact details

If you cannot make your appointment or have any questions or concerns please call the audiology department on **020 3311 1021** or email us at audiology.imperial@nhs.net

How to find adult audiology

At Charing Cross Hospital we are on the first floor of the south wing.

If you need **hospital transport**, please call **020 3311 5353** for an eligibility check.

How do I make a comment about my experience?

If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088**. You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Your balance assessment appointment

Information for patients, relatives and carers

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