The Value of Audiologists in the Assessment and Treatment of Balance and Dizziness

33.4 million adults in the United States report a balance or dizziness problem in the past 12 months.¹

20-33% of patients in balance/dizziness clinics have BPPV with a lifetime prevalence of 2.4%.²³⁴

Many patients with balance or dizziness problems receive inefficient and/or unnecessary services leading to a costly care pathway.

- These patients are often seen by three or more health professionals.⁵⁶
- Patients with diagnosed BPPV undergo unnecessary imaging (19%) and are prescribed ineffective medication (19%-50%).⁵⁷
- Treating BPPV costs approximately $8,247 per year per patient.⁸
- Unnecessary care (e.g., excessive appointments, unwarranted imaging tests, inappropriate treatments) costs an average of $2,009.63.⁶
- Although nearly 90% of primary care physicians agree that assessing balance is important when patients report symptoms, approximately 55% indicate that they do not have time to include a balance screening during routine care.⁹

Audiologist involvement in vestibular testing and treatment improves patient outcomes, referral pathways, and interdisciplinary care.

- 100% of patients report reduction or complete resolution of BPPV symptoms with audiological care.¹¹²
- 63.9%-94.2% of BPPV patients experience symptom resolution after canalith repositioning maneuvers and are 17.3%-55% less likely to experience relapse of symptoms than those who do not receive treatment.¹³¹⁴¹⁵¹⁶
- Patients are seen an average of 23 days sooner with triage through an audiologist.¹⁷
- 93% of patients receive a definitive diagnosis after a single appointment in a multidisciplinary care clinic with an audiologist.¹⁸
- The diagnostic accuracy of BPPV increases 59% when the initial examination includes an audiologist.¹⁹
- 51% of patients are treated and discharged after the first visit when care is triaged through an audiologist.¹²⁰
- Secondary referrals decrease 36%, with 78% of patients managed without a referral to an otolaryngologist.¹⁷²⁰

Abbreviations: BPPV: Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo
* With audiological care in a multidisciplinary clinic

Last Updated: 7/2023
References


