



First aid fact sheet

Vertigo [dizziness]

Vertigo is a type of dizziness where you feel as though you or your surroundings are spinning, tilting or swaying.

Most dizziness is caused by problems of the inner ear which are treatable.

Sometimes dizziness can be caused by other conditions such as low blood pressure, some heart problems, anxiety or low blood sugar.

Signs and symptoms

- a sensation of movement (spinning, tilting, swaying) either of yourself or your surroundings
- unsteadiness, difficulty walking straight
- light-headedness
- feeling faint

Other symptoms can include:

- headache
- nausea and vomiting
- ringing sound in ears
- difficulty hearing
- staggering gait and loss of coordination
- jerky eye movements
- difficulty seeing clearly

What to do

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Help the casualty to sit or lie down in a comfortable position, and rest.
- 3 Advise the casualty to avoid abrupt head movements, especially looking up and making sudden changes in body position.
- 4 Provide the casualty with water to drink.
- 5 Turn off bright lights and ensure a flow of fresh air.
- 6 If this is the first time that the casualty has experienced dizziness or vertigo advise them to see their doctor.

Keep the person safe

- If standing or walking, help the casualty to avoid falling.
- If the casualty feels nauseous or is vomiting, have them lie down on their side.
- Do not allow the casualty to operate any machinery or drive.

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

DRSABCD Danger ► Response ► Send for help ► Airway ► Breathing ► CPR ► Defibrillation

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