Balance systems in the body

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Most people don"t find it difficult to walk across a gravel driveway, transition from walking on a sidewalk to grass, or get out of bed in the middle of the night without stumbling. However, with impaired balance such activities can be extremely fatiguing and sometimes dangerous. Symptoms that accompany the unsteadiness can include dizziness, vertigo, hearing and vision problems, and difficulty with concentration and memory. Learning more about your vestibular system can help you understand what happens when something goes wrong.

The vestibular system can be divided into two main systems: the central system (the brain and brainstem) and the peripheral system (the inner ear and the pathways to the brainstem). This publication discusses the peripheral vestibular system in depth.

One important distinction when diagnosing a vestibular problem is whether a patient"s dizziness originates from the peripheral vestibular system (the labyrinth of the inner ear and the pathways/nerves connecting to the brainstem) or the central vestibular system (the brain and brainstem). Learn more about central causes of dizziness here.

An explanation of how the balance system recovers from injury through the compensation process; acute (immediate) and chronic (long-term) compensation; causes of decompensation and failure to compensate; use of medication and vestibular rehabilitation therapy.

Fall prevention is important for seniors Fall prevention for older adults is an important part of addressing one of the leading health concerns for people over the age of 60, which is falling, often related

Originating in China centuries ago, Tai Chi is a martial art characterized by gracefully flowing movements and postures. Extensive medical literature, as well as the direct experience of physical therapists and other clinicians, supports Tai Chi as an excellent complementary therapy to vestibular rehabilitation. This article discusses the benefits of using Tai Chi to improve balance.

Overview The fluid within the inner ear's membranous labyrinth is called endolymph (endo-: inside or within). The fluid contained between the bony labyrinth and the membranous labyrinth is perilymph (peri-: around or about). These two

The vestibular system is made up of three semicircular canals and two otolith organs, which are found diagonally under the semicircular canals. Each of the semicircular canals is filled with fluid and ends in a space called the ampulla. The ampulla spaces and otolith organs have small sensory hair cells in them.

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