

Vestibular rehabilitation (VR), or vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT) is a specialized form of therapy intended to alleviate both the primary and secondary problems caused by vestibular disorders. It is an exercise-based program primarily designed to reduce vertigo and dizziness, gaze instability, and/or imbalance and falls. For most people with a vestibular disorder the deficit is permanent because the amount of restoration of vestibular function is very small. However, after vestibular system damage, people can feel better and function can return through compensation. This occurs because the brain learns to use other senses (vision and somatosensory, i.e. body sense) to substitute for the deficient vestibular system. The health of particular parts of the nervous system (brainstem and cerebellum, visual, and somatosensory sensations) is important in determining the extent of recovery that can be gained through compensation.

For many, compensation occurs naturally over time, but for people whose symptoms do not reduce and who continue to have difficulty returning to daily activities, VRT can help with recovery by promoting compensation.

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