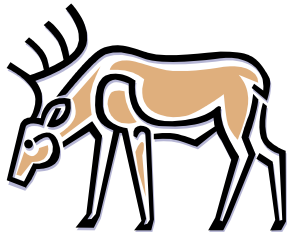


Hearing and Balance Centers *at the Elks*

IDAHO ELKS REHABILITATION HOSPITAL



Hear the News!!!

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What is dizziness?

Dizziness is a broad label for many symptoms that are difficult to describe with words. People with inner ear disorders may experience a wide range of sensations that can be categorized as dizziness. Some examples are:

- Spinning, whether yourself or things around you
- Floating
- Sensation of movement
- Falling
- Blurred vision
- Disorientation
- Difficulty thinking or paying attention
- Foggy sensation
- Fatigue, loss of energy or stamina
- Light headedness



People with non-vestibular or inner disorders may also have some of these sensations, so it can be difficult to determine the source of your problem. For example, many medications may make you feel lightheaded, foggy, or floating. Someone with low blood pressure may also experience light headedness when first rising from a chair. As a result, determining the cause of dizziness can be a challenging task. A team approach for a thorough evaluation is truly needed involving your physician, audiologist, and physical therapist.

If you experience some of these symptoms and have not consulted with your physician, please do so. Dizziness can be a sign of inner ear disorders or medical problems that need addressed, as people who experience dizziness also frequently experience imbalance and falls. Treatment and help are available for medical and inner ear causes of dizziness, so do not let it limit your lifestyle and activities.

Hearing and Balance Centers *at the Elks* Eagle clinic is now open



On February 23, 2009, the Hearing and Balance Centers *at the Elks* opened a new clinic in Eagle, Idaho. The clinic is located on the second floor of the new St. Luke's Eagle Regional Medical Center on State Street.

Our Eagle office will be providing a variety of hearing and balance services including: comprehensive pediatric and adult hearing evaluations, hearing aids and related services, osseointegrated implant (baha) assessments, assistive listening devices, Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD) evaluations and treatment, Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) evaluations, Electro- and Videonystagmography (ENG/VNG) evaluations, vestibular assessment and treatment for Vertigo, dizziness and motion sensitivity, balance assessment and treatment for disequilibrium and falling, Computerized Dynamic Posturography (CDP) assessment and treatment.

Clinic hours: 9:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Phone number: 208.489.4975

Aural Rehabilitation in the Workplace (from The ASHA Leader, Nov 25, 2008 p. 14-17)



Hearing loss does not just happen to people once they become a certain age. Granted, the older we are, the greater the chance is that we indeed have some degree of hearing loss. Studies have shown that between 25-40% of adults have hearing loss at age 65 and by 80 years of age, that number is over 80%. A growing segment of the population that struggles with hearing loss is still working and is needing assistive devices of all kinds in the workplace. Waiting until retirement is not always an option. Besides, communication is vitally important to all relationships; whether it is your marriage, your children, your co-workers or your boss.

Audiologists are treating patients who are well-educated, healthy and have many moons left to work. These patients are the 'baby-boomers' or younger segments of the population who "expect and deserve to retain the ability to conduct their daily work-related responsibilities and to advance within their companies." Some focus group studies were done recently in the areas of job performance, acceptance and accommodations, and emotional reactions to hearing loss in the workplace. Although the answers might not surprise you, what is important to learn is that you are not alone and you have rights. With some acceptance of the hearing loss and use of the devices which will make communicating easier, you have the ability to succeed.

Most of the participants in the study felt their job performance was affected by their hearing loss. They felt talking successfully with peers was compromised and they could not perform their duties as effectively. Many felt the hearing loss affected their ability to fully participate in meetings. Some even admitted to not wanting to tell others about the hearing loss as others might perceive them differently. Yet, 70% said they would, in almost every situation, tell co-workers about the hearing loss. This is a great example of advocacy for yourself. Telling others about the hearing loss and how best they can talk with you will make successful communication happen! Participants felt it was "more acceptable to disclose a hearing loss and perform the job competently than to hide the hearing loss and deliver impaired performance." If someone was discouraged from promotion, getting hearing aids made a huge difference. In other words, untreated hearing loss will lead to poorer performance; however, working with current technology will not slow you down in the workplace and can only help you succeed. The participants in the study talked about taking responsibility for managing the communication situation – overcoming the listening challenges. Examples of this would be sitting at the front of a room for a conference, carefully choosing restaurants for lunch, being prepared for meetings in order to follow the conversation, and using assistive listening devices to make listening easier (such as an FM system). Still, there are emotional tolls that take place. Feelings of anxiety, self-consciousness, frustration and anger are felt by those with hearing loss. However, 20% of the participants also felt accepted because the hearing loss does not need to define who they are or the work that they do.

One source of valuable information is the American with Disabilities Act, which ensures that people with hearing loss have the same employment opportunities as people with normal hearing. (Website is: www.eeoc.gov/facts/deafness.html). Know your rights and exercise them. Using email, getting an amplified phone, using an FM system to hear better in noise and using hearing aids sooner rather than later will make a difference in your success in the workplace. Also, participating in aural rehabilitation classes to arm yourself with knowledge is powerful. The Hearing and Balance Centers at the Elks holds classes such as these the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Consider coming – they are held at our Boise office. Call 489-4999 for more information.

Vitamins, minerals and hearing loss prevention (from The ASHA Leader, 12/16/08 pg. 5)

Research continues in the quest to stop hearing loss from occurring. The latest studies are looking at how a combination of vitamins A, C, E and the mineral magnesium can prevent or reduce the effects of noise-induced hearing loss. Human clinical trials are underway in four multinational sites. It is the first national Institutes of Health study regarding the prevention of noise-induced hearing loss. Still, the best medicine is prevention, so don't forget those earplugs! For improved comfort, fit and noise reduction, custom earplugs are your best option. If interested, give one of our offices a call.



Coping with Chronic Vestibular Disorders

Receiving a diagnosis of a vestibular disorder can be both relieving and overwhelming. You may feel relieved that your disorder has a name, and that it is not fatal. However, it can be overwhelming to realize the symptoms may possibly remain or recur indefinitely. You may have been told, "You need to learn to live with it". Although no one "dies" of a vestibular disorder, a profound loss has occurred, and this can have a huge impact on your life.

Tools for coping with a vestibular disorder may include:

- Measure time in long, rather than short, intervals
- Prepare for "worst-case scenarios", and have a plan of action
- Use imagery
- Reframe your thoughts
- Educate yourself – knowledge is empowering
- Find a support group
- Maintain a balance between coping and hoping



The Vestibular Disorders Association (VEDA) has a website providing information about vestibular disorders, finding a health professional and locations of support groups. This can be found at www.vestibular.org. A support group can be a beneficial way of learning new information and realizing that you are not alone. The Hearing and Balance Centers at the Elks has established a vestibular support group which meets four times a year in January, April, July and October. Please contact one of our clinics to receive more information on the next upcoming meeting.

Free Adult Aural Rehabilitation Group

There will be four FREE sessions, beginning in January. You are invited to come to one or to all of the sessions! Family members are encouraged to attend. Each session lasts for one hour and covers a variety of topics. Classes are geared toward adults with any degree of hearing loss and their family members. After presentations, there will be a question and answer period at which time, participation is encouraged.

Snacks and beverages are provided.

Topics covered include:

Session 1, January 28, 2009 4-5 pm

-Hearing Loss: What is it and how to manage it



Session 2, February 25, 2009 4-5 pm

-Communication Strategies

Session 3, March 25, 2009, 4-5 pm

-Hearing Aids (Technology, Styles, Expectations)



Session 4, April 22, 2009 4-5 pm

-Assistive Listening Devices and Self-Advocacy

Location: Hearing and Balance Center at the Elks
510 N 2nd St, Boise, ID 83702

Please RSVP to Karrie Weightman, Au.D.
(208) 489-4999 or kweightman@ierh.org

New Developments at the Hearing and Balance Center at the Elks

HBC Vestibular Support Group meets on April 21, 2009, in Meridian. Please contact Dayna Olson, Vestibular Physical Therapist in Meridian at 489-5999, for more information.

New additions to the Hearing and Balance staff:

- Dona Bowen has joined the Eagle clinical support staff
- Donna Freestone has joined the Boise clinical support staff

In May 2009, David Ness, Kari Ann Paynter, and Rob Summers, Hearing and Balance 4th year Audiology residents will be graduating with their clinical Doctorates in Audiology (Au.D.). Congrats David, Kari and Rob!



Noisy toys can be much louder than we think and can cause hearing loss in our most precious joys – our children. Some noisy toys can expose the ear to noise levels of 120 dB! If a toy is capable of producing noise levels of 100 dB, the child should play with that toy less than 15 minutes at a time. For every additional 3 dB of volume, halve the time the child should be around the noise.

Truly, the child should have ear protection on, but that is not very realistic . Toys that can be this loud include: **cap guns, vehicles with horns and sirens, walkie-talkies, musical instruments, and talking dolls.** Just as we are very careful about buying toys with small pieces that could be swallowed, we need to be careful about buying toys that make noise.