

## Allied Health - Physiotherapy

### What does a physiotherapist do?

A physiotherapist helps you regain your maximum physical and functional capacities by various approaches following a neurological diagnosis or injury.

### What is the vestibular system?

The vestibular system includes the peripheral vestibular system (the inner ear and the pathway to the brain) and the central vestibular system (the brain and brainstem). This system is responsible for maintaining balance, stability, and spatial orientation. It can do so with the reflexes that coordinate eye and head movements to keep vision in focus, activate neck musculature to stabilize the head and maintain posture to an upright position.

### What does a vestibular physiotherapist do?

A vestibular physiotherapist focuses on rehabilitation with individualized, exercised-based treatment that can be effective in improving symptoms related to many vestibular disorders. During a comprehensive clinical assessment, three different compensation mechanisms, or recovery principles are used:

- **Adaptation:** Involves readjusting the gain of the vestibulo-ocular and vestibulospinal reflexes, where nerve impulses in the brain adapt to the incorrect signals from the damaged peripheral vestibular system.
- **Substitution:** Employs alternative strategies to replace the lost vestibular function.
- **Habituation:** Occurs through repetitive exposure to provocative movement.

Some examples of vestibular exercises commonly used in vestibular rehabilitation are:

- Canalith Repositing Maneuver
- Gaze Stabilization Exercises
- Balance Retraining
- Optokinetic Stimulation Exercises
- Habituation Exercises