

Patient information factsheet

Your balance assessment appointment

We have given you this factsheet because you have been referred to the audiology department for a balance assessment. It explains what to expect at your appointment and how to prepare for it. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

What is a balance assessment?

A balance assessment is made up of a number of different tests. The tests are designed to assess whether the balance organs in your ears (vestibular system) are working properly. Different tests are appropriate for different people. The length of your appointment will vary depending on the tests you require. Please allow up to two and a half hours for your appointment.

Location of your appointment

Your appointment will be at the audiology department in the Royal South Hants Hospital.

Before your appointment

Alcohol and medication

It is important that you do not drink any alcohol or take any medications prescribed for balance problems for 48 hours before your appointment. We may be unable to perform the balance assessment if you do so.

If you are not sure about which medications to stop taking, please contact us on **023 8120 2997** before stopping any of your usual medications.

Earwax or ear infection

Please contact your GP surgery to have your ears checked for a build-up of wax or an infection. This is not necessary if you have had your ears checked in the last three months. If there is a build-up of wax or an infection in your ears, we may not be able to carry out all of the balance tests.

Cancelling or changing your appointment

Please let us know as soon as possible if you no longer require this appointment or need it to be rescheduled. This will allow us to offer the appointment slot to another person and help us to reduce the waiting times.

On the day of your appointment

You should:

- wear loose, comfortable clothing (preferably trousers) and flat shoes (no heels)
- not wear face or eye makeup (some tests are very sensitive to interference from makeup)
- bring glasses or hearing aids if you usually wear these
- allow plenty of time to get to the hospital and to park your car

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During your appointment

We will introduce ourselves and ask you to briefly explain your balance problem. We will then begin a series of different tests. Before each test, we will explain what you need to do. For example, you may need to sit or lie down in different positions. If you have any questions, we will be happy to answer these.

Are there any risks?

Some of the tests may make you feel unsteady or dizzy. This feeling is usually very short-lived, but it can occasionally last longer. We therefore advise that you bring someone with you to your appointment who can take you home, or arrange for someone to pick you up after your appointment. We also advise that you do not drive immediately after the tests.

When will I receive my results?

We will usually be able to give you your results at the end of your appointment. In some cases, your results may be passed on to your consultant who will explain them to you.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your appointment, please contact us.

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds**