

Dizziness - Symptom

Definition

- Dizziness is a sensation of light-headedness or feeling faint

Health Information

Symptoms

- Feeling dizzy or light headed
- Feeling unsteady with slight loss of balance
- Feeling "woozy" or not thinking clearly
- May also have brief blurring of vision

Causes

- Dizziness is usually due to transient reduced blood flow to the brain. It can be triggered by many normal events:
 - Standing too long in one place. Reason: causes pooling of blood in the legs.
 - Standing up suddenly. Reason: causes sudden drop in blood pressure
 - Not drinking enough fluid. Reason: causes mild dehydration
 - Running and out of breath. Reason: transient reduced oxygen levels can't meet body's needs
 - Excessive sun or hot tub exposure. Reason: increased sweating.
 - Sports or hard work. Reason: causes sweating and fluid loss
 - Skipping a meal. Reason: low blood sugar.
- Fevers
- Motion sickness. Main symptoms are dizziness and nausea.
- Viral syndrome. Patients with viral illnesses (e.g., colds, flu) often report some dizziness. This is never the only symptom. It may relate to weakness from being sick.
- Serious Cause: Vertigo. In addition to dizziness, the child complains that the room is spinning. They can't walk if they have vertigo. True vertigo is very rare in children. It's usually caused by middle ear disease.

Dizziness Scale

- **Mild:** walks normal
- **Moderate:** interferes with normal activities such as playing, school or sports
- **Severe:** can't stand, needs support to walk, feels like passing out now

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- Dizziness that goes away is a harmless symptom.
- It's usually due to not drinking enough water during sports or hot weather.
- It can also be caused by skipping a meal or too much sun.
- Sometimes, it's part of a viral illness.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Rest:

- Lie down with feet up for 1 hour. This will increase blood flow to the brain.

3. **Fluids:**

- Drink several glasses of fruit juice, other clear fluids or water. This will improve your child's fluid status and blood sugar.
- If the weather is hot, make sure the fluids are cold.

4. **Cool Off:**

- If the weather is hot, use a cold pack or washcloth to the forehead.
- Taking a cool shower or bath will help even more.

5. **Prevention:**

- Extra water and salty foods during exercise or hot weather
- Regular mealtimes and snacks
- Enough sleep and rest

6. **What to Expect:**

- With treatment, the dizziness usually goes away in 1 to 2 hours.
- Mild dizziness with a viral illness may last 1 or 2 days.

Call Your Doctor If

- After 2 hours of rest and fluids, still feeling dizzy
- Mild dizziness lasts over 3 days
- Your child passes out (faints)
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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