

DIZZINESS and DISEQUILIBRIUM

- Dizziness is prevalent, with estimates ranging from 1.8% in young adults to more than 30% in the elderly and causing considerable morbidity and utilization of health services.
- It has been estimated that 65% of individuals older than 60 years of age experience dizziness or loss of balance, often on a daily basis.
- Dizziness is a common symptom affecting about 30% of people over the age of 65.
- It has been reported that, in the primary care setting, 70% of elderly patients present with dizziness; and that 3,200 per 100,000 new cases per year visit a primary care physician.
- 23-30% of adults have experienced at least one episode of dizziness and 3.5% of adults experience a chronic recurrent episode greater than one-year duration by age 65.
- Approximately 12.5 million Americans over the age of 65 have a dizziness or balance problem that significantly interferes with their lives.
- There are an estimated 5 to 8 million physician visits for dizziness in the United States each year; dizziness is a primary reason for an office visit in the over 75 age group.
- One in three people will experience dizziness or imbalance during their lifetime.
- In the US, the estimated cost of medical care for patients with balance disorders exceeds \$1 billion annually.
- Nonspecific disequilibrium affects about 1/3 of people over the age of 75.
- Dizziness can be difficult to diagnose, particularly in elderly persons, in whom it often represents dysfunction in more than one body system.
- Many cases of dizziness are actually neurological.
- In a study involving 96 asymptomatic controls and 149 dizzy subjects, ENG failed to discriminate dizzy subjects from controls and failed to differentiate various dizziness syndromes.