



Balance Problems

Balance problems are extremely common.

Statistics from the UK show that:

- 30% population consult on giddiness by age 65
- It is the Commonest reason for GP appointment in the over 75's
- Results in early retirement and chronic illness in 18%
- 5500 patients attend the Leicester Balance Centre every year with balance issues.

It is a very similar picture here in Australia.

The balance organs in the ears

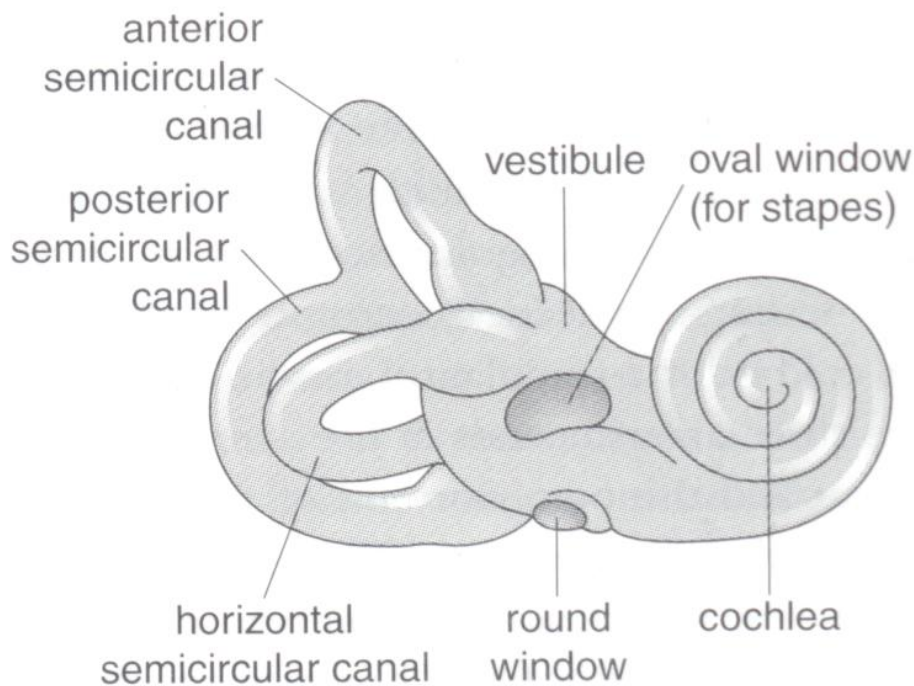


Fig. 1.5 Right bony labyrinth (lateral view).

(P.D.Bull "Lecture Notes on diseases of the ear, nose and throat")

The ears are an important component of your balance. The balance organs are made up of the three semicircular canals and the vestibule. They contain receptors which measure angular and rotational movements of the head and movement relative to gravity. This is fed back to the brainstem to

coordinate movement. Both ears contribute 15% of our overall balance. 70% of balance is controlled by our eyesight and another 15% from joint and muscle sensors (Proprioception). All of this information is fed back to the Cerebellum or hind brain which controls our balance and movement.

