

Common symptom: Dizziness

1) Clarify the symptom with the patient: what does it feel like when you are dizzy?

2) Think of 4 possibilities:

- near syncope(fainting)
- vertigo (spinning)
- disequilibrium (falling)
- non-specific dizziness-screen for depression and anxiety.

3) If vertigo- Is it central or peripheral?

Clues to central vertigo:

- CNS signs and symptom-
Symptom: dysarthria, diplopia, weakness, abnormal gait, incoordination.
Signs: CN abnormalities, ataxia, positive Romberg's, abnormal nystagmus(not fatigable).
- Headache
- Significant imbalance
- Cerebrovascular risk factors.

Differential diagnosis of peripheral vertigo:

Determining the **duration** of a **single episode** of vertigo is critical to establish the correct diagnosis.

- BPPV- duration is secs to <1 min, precipitated by positional change.
- Meniere's disease- mins to hours, tinnitus, hearing loss.
- Vestibular neuronitis- lasting days.