

## Meniere's Disease

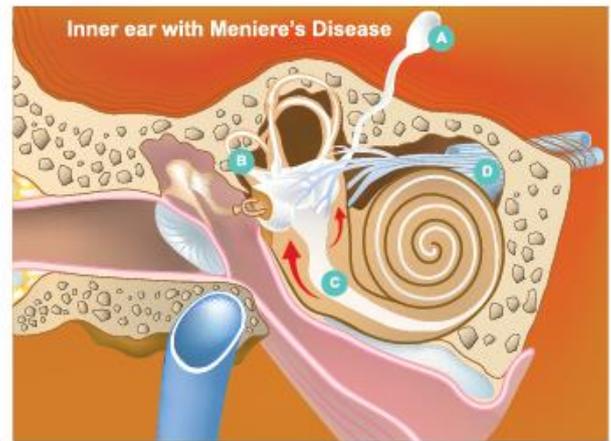
### What is Meniere's disease?

Meniere's disease is a long term, progressive condition affecting the balance and hearing parts of the inner ear. Symptoms are acute attacks of vertigo (severe dizziness), fluctuating tinnitus, increasing deafness, and a feeling of pressure in the ear.

## Meniere's Disease



A. Endolymphatic sac  
B. Balance canals  
C. Hearing canal  
D. Hearing and balance nerve



A. Backed-up fluid leads to swelling and pressure  
B. Swelling distorts balance information  
C. Swelling distorts sound information  
D. Distorted information travels to brain

### Who is affected by Meniere's disease?

The incidence is between 1:1000 and 1:2000 of the population; depending on the source. Both sexes are equally affected, and it can occur at any age. About 7-10% of sufferers have a family history of the disease.

### What causes Meniere's?

The cause of Meniere's is unknown. There are many factors that are thought to be involved in the development of the condition, such as increased pressure of the fluid in the endolymphatic sac; allergic factors damaging the inner ear or other unknown factors. The relationship between these factors and the progression of the condition, however, remains unclear.

## **What are the symptoms of Meniere's disease?**

These are the most common symptoms of Meniere's disease:

- Vertigo/Severe nausea/Vomiting/Sweating
- Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)
- Fluctuation of hearing during attack or loss hearing in affected ear over time
- Pressure in the affected ear
- Loss of balance

## **How is Meniere's disease diagnosed?**

There is no specific test that, on its own, is reliable in diagnosing Meniere's disease. A diagnosis is usually based on a patient's history, a hearing test which shows a progressive hearing loss typically a low frequency hearing loss. Simple clinic balance tests will be carried out by either an ENT Consultant or an Audiologist. Occasionally scans and other specific vestibular function tests may be required to help with the diagnosis of Meniere's disease.

## **What are the treatments for Meniere's Disease?**

Treatment will vary with the needs of each individual and may include medication, vestibular rehabilitation, diet and lifestyle changes, tinnitus management, hearing aids and counselling. In four out of five people non-surgical measures are sufficient to control the symptoms of Meniere's disease; however, if vertigo remains a problem surgical procedure may help.

## **Top Tips for coping with Meniere's disease**

- Eat regularly and keep hydrated
- Stay physically active- Pilates, Tai-Chi, Walking
- Rest/ sleep well
- If you wear glasses, ensure your prescription is up to date
- Ensure you take your prescribed medication as instructed
- If you are a driver, you must inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) that you have been diagnosed with Meniere's disease. Please see 'driving and dizziness'.

## **Useful links?**

<https://patient.info/ears-nose-throat-mouth/tinnitus-leaflet/menieres-disease#some-important-safety-points>

[www.menieres.org.uk](http://www.menieres.org.uk)

[www.vestibular.org](http://www.vestibular.org)

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact The Balance Team Secretary: 0121 424 3154

## Accessibility

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