



FEELING *dizzy?*

PHYSICAL THERAPY IS THE BEST PLACE TO START

By Jenna Rehnstrom-Liberto

“75% of patients with dizziness also have anxiety because dizziness itself is anxiety-provoking. Some patients are so frustrated when they come in because some have even been to the ER thinking they’re having a stroke,” Dr. Sarah Sitzmann-Ruehle, PT, DPT.

Dizziness can be caused by a variety of issues, but in all cases, the symptom can interfere with your life, cause frustration and even anxiety. If you’ve ever experienced unexplained dizziness or loss of balance, the experts at FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers of Dakota Dunes are expertly trained to get to the bottom of the problem and help you heal.

“I’ve had patients who walk in and the room is spinning and when they leave it’s not. I’ve had patients who were nearing 100 years old who wanted to keep living in their home and keep their independence and they were able to do that,” says Dr. Sarah Sitzmann-Ruehle, PT, DPT.

Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle specializes in vestibular and balance physical therapy. She says because the root cause of dizziness is often difficult to diagnose, many patients search for answers or live with unpleasant symptoms for much too long. Thankfully, the unique expertise of the team at FYZICAL is a perfect match for cases both routine and challenging.

“We see dizziness cases all day every day and we are skilled at treating it,” adds Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle. “We are the experts in dizziness and we want you to trust in what physical therapy can do for you.”

So, what is one of the most common causes of this sometimes-debilitating problem? To start looking for the answer, we go inside the inner ear to a tiny pouch that contains microscopic calcium crystals. These crystals sense balance and spatial orientation by sending nerve signals to the brain when we move.

When a crystal breaks loose from its “home,” either due to a hit to the head, a fall or trauma or

another unknown cause, it ends up in one of our six inner ear canals and causes an imbalance in the signals our ears send to our brain.

One of the most common and treatable types of dizziness is called BPPV, a form of vertigo, which causes sudden dizziness brought on by movements of the head.

Once Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle is able to make this diagnosis, she goes to work identifying where the crystal is trapped.

“I do that by watching the eyes. When these crystals are loose, the eyes move in a specific way based on which canal the crystal is stuck in,” says Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle. “And then I choose the treatment for my patient based on where the crystal is located.”

That treatment includes exercises and maneuvers used to get the crystals back in the right place. For BPPV and other dizziness caused by the inner ear, Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle says once she knows her patient can benefit from this type of physical therapy, known as vestibular rehabilitation, they go to work strengthening the inner ear.

“When you’re trying to strengthen a muscle, you do repetitions with that muscle group,” she explains. “We do the same with the inner ear. We do this by moving the head and then to challenge that ‘ear to brain’ signal, we compromise the other two balance systems: your eyes and body.”

An example of this kind of exercise would be standing on a squishy piece of foam with your eyes closed. Because your other balance systems (your eyes and body) are compromised, your brain will force your inner ear to work much harder.

As with all physical therapy, sticking with a treatment plan and exercise regimen is key to success, but some cases of dizziness can be solved in as few as one to three sessions.

Whatever the root cause or how long you’ve been experiencing the problem, Dr. Sitzmann-Ruehle wants you to know she’s here to help you meet your goals and get back to feeling like yourself again.

“If you’re not sure, why not call and let us answer your questions about physical therapy? We can work with you to get you feeling comfortable and get this taken care of as soon as possible.”

If you or a loved one are suffering from dizziness, give FYZICAL a call to schedule your evaluation. No referral needed!

“WE ARE THE EXPERTS IN DIZZINESS AND WE WANT YOU TO TRUST IN WHAT PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN DO FOR YOU.”



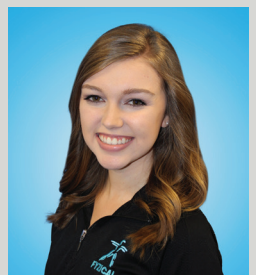
Dr. Mallory Hertz
Physical Therapist



Dr. Sarah Sitzmann-Ruehle
Physical Therapist



Krissi Milton
Physical Therapist Assistant



Hannah Moos
Physical Therapist Assistant



605.217.4330 • www.fyzical.com/dakota-dunes-sd
101 Tower Rd. #110, Dakota Dunes, SD 57049