

Information about the VEMP (Vestibular Evoked Myogenic Potential) for Medicare Beneficiaries

The vestibular (balance) nerve which runs from the inner ear to your brain has two divisions, upper and lower. Some of the vestibular testing we perform evaluates the upper division, while the VEMP is the only technology available today to assess the lower division. Without performing the VEMP, we may miss (be unable to diagnose) what is causing your dizziness or imbalance.

VEMP technology has been available for about 20 years and utilized widely as part of a standard test battery of vestibular disorders facilities such as Emory University, Cleveland Clinic and Mayo Clinic. Unfortunately, Medicare has not yet recognized the diagnostic value of the VEMP and does not cover this service. Most *private insurance companies do* recognize and are covering the cost of the VEMP.

[On a related note, many are familiar with the “crystals” in the inner ear that cause vertigo, a condition known as BPPV - while the cure for this condition was described in 1992 (the Epley maneuver), it took Medicare 19 years (2011) to recognize this as a treatment.]

As the VEMP takes time to perform, requires expensive equipment and disposable supplies, the charge for this service is \$75 as Medicare does not cover it. You will need to decide whether you wish to receive this test as part of your diagnostic evaluation for dizziness, vertigo or imbalance.

Below are some references regarding the VEMP test.

<http://www.balancemd.net/VEMP.html>

<http://neurology.emory.edu/education/fellowships/vestibular.html>

<http://www.clevelandclinicmeded.com/medicalpubs/diseasemanagement/neurology/dizziness/>

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/menieres-disease/basics/tests-diagnosis/con-20028251>

Please let us know if you have any questions. One of our Audiologists will be reviewing this information with you at the time of your test.