UpRight Physiotherapy
keep your balance

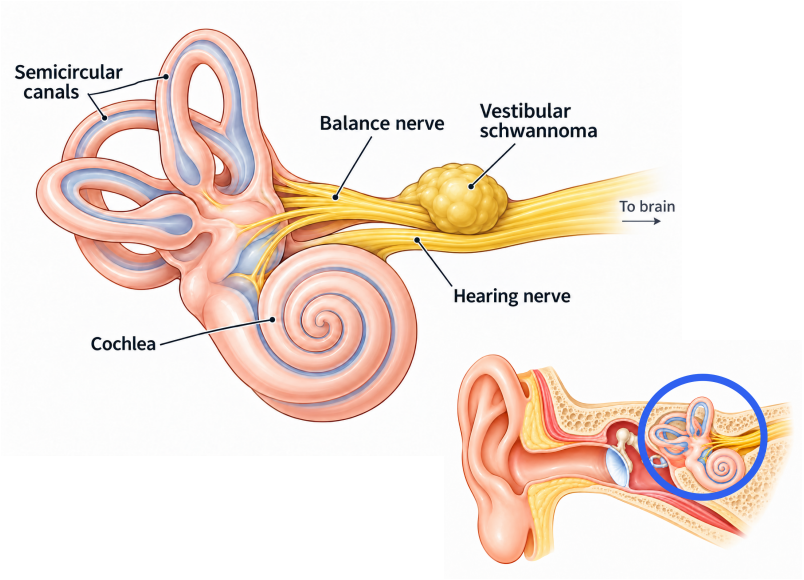
PATIENT INFORMATION

Vestibular schwannoma

Also called an acoustic neuroma

What is a vestibular schwannoma?

A vestibular schwannoma is a **benign (non-cancerous) growth** that usually develops from the covering of the vestibular (balance) nerve. It usually affects one side. Many grow slowly, and some do not continue growing.



Balance and hearing divisions travel together as the vestibulocochlear nerve (CN VIII). Not to scale.

What might you notice?

- Hearing loss in one ear
- Ringing or buzzing in the ear (tinnitus)
- Dizziness or unsteadiness, especially when moving, although true vertigo is uncommon
- Less commonly, facial numbness or weakness

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis involves specialist assessment, hearing tests, and an **MRI scan** to show the growth's size and location. Balance testing may help guide rehabilitation.

How is it managed?

Your specialist will consider its size, growth, symptoms, and your preferences.

- **Monitoring:** Regular MRI scans and hearing tests if immediate treatment is not needed.
- **Radiotherapy:** Targeted radiation, such as Gamma Knife, aims to control growth.
- **Surgery:** Removes some or all of the growth. Hearing, balance, or facial nerve function may be affected.

Rehabilitation and support

Vestibular rehabilitation is a key part of managing dizziness and imbalance. Tailored exercises can help your brain adapt, improve balance, and build confidence with movement.

Audiology can help with hearing devices, tinnitus management, and communication strategies.

Recovery varies. Keep active within your agreed plan and attend follow-up appointments.

Sources: NIDCD; NHS; Cambridge University Hospitals; Yap et al. (2024); CN VIII anatomy.