

Outcomes and Expectations for Patients with Vestibular Hypofunction

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Susan Herdman, PhD, PT, FAPTA gave an outstanding update on expectations for the best outcome among patients with unilateral vestibular hypofunction (UVH) at CSM 2009. She presented new data from 142 individuals with UVH treated using vestibular adaptation and substitution. Outcome measures included visual analog score for oscillopsia, perceived disequilibrium, Activities Balance Confidence Scale, dynamic visual acuity, gait speed, and Dizziness Handicap Inventory. For each measure, approximately 70% of patients improved. Improvement, however, was not consistent across outcome measures. Additionally, patients' initial subjective complaints were predictive of subjective outcomes, whereas initial objective measures predict outcome on objective measures.

A few take home messages were: 1) Most, but not all, patients with UVH, get better; 2) Whether or not people are identified as 'better' depends on the outcomes measured; therefore it is best to measure a variety of outcome measures; and finally 3) more work is needed to determine effective interventions for the 30% or so of patients who do not get better.