

Dizziness

Focused History

History of Present Illness

Caveat: First question, “what do you mean by dizzy?”

People use “dizzy” to describe different sensations.

What does this patient mean?

Vertigo: Sensation of rotation, tipping, or motion.

Lightheadedness or presyncope: Feeling of passing out, losing consciousness.

Dysequilibrium or imbalance: Not presyncopal, but loss of balance.

Nonspecific, ill defined: Not vertiginous, not presyncopal, not easily classified as dysequilibrium.

1. **Character/circumstances:** Type of dizziness as above. How did it start? (antecedent URI; associated with any injuries?)
2. **Exacerbating/alleviating factors:** Orthostatic? Turning head or body a certain way? During or after activity? Under stress?
3. **Associated symptoms:** Have they fallen because of the dizziness? Nausea, tinnitus, or hearing loss (triad for vestibular problems)? Vision dims? Curtain coming down? Spots before eyes? Neck pain? Headache? Palpitations? Chest pressure? Associated with cough, micturition, defecation, anxiety, or tingling in fingers or around mouth?
- 4.