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Striking the Right Balance: Balance Function Assessment and Management

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In this edition of "Striking the Right Balance," our co-editor Erica Zaia reviews a new edition of a must-read textbook in Vestibular Audiology.

Michael Vekasi, AuD, R.Aud, Aud(C), FAAA and Erica Zaia, MSc, RAUD are coordinating the "Striking the Right Balance," feature which will cover the latest information on 'all things vestibular.'

If you would like to be more involved in all things vestibular, please check out and like our Facebook page by searching for "CAA National Vestibular Special Interest Group" within Facebook. You can also reach us by email at CAAvestibular@gmail.com.

THIRD EDITION, 2021

Gary P. Jacobson, Neil T. Shepard, Kamran Barin, Robert F. Burkard, Kristen Janky, Devin L. McCaslin

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Reviewed by *Erica Zaia*

It is not often that you feel you are receiving a precious gift when you are assigned a job, but that is how I felt when I was asked to review “the” textbook “Balance Function Assessment and Management.” I am a known vestibular aficionado and have no shame confessing that I own a signed copy of this book’s first edition. Neil Shepard, inspiration and limitless source of knowledge, wrote, “Good luck working with this population.” I feel privileged to be still serving them and very lucky to count on the Third Edition of this book to keep expanding my knowledge and sharpening my clinical skills.

I proudly carry this heavy hardcover from home to the clinic often. It is undeniably the most comprehensive and in-depth book in our field, and the clinician who owns it will not be disappointed or short for answers. Once again, the editors did a terrific job curating the best authors for each of the 27 chapters and 4 appendices.

A highlight is the companion website where you can watch several videos accompanying chapter 10 on ocular motility testing, excellent videos on the technique to perform video head impulse test

on all planes, and a fun virtual reality posturography recording.

Vestibular enthusiasts will read the first chapter with interest. If you are like me, you may enjoy telling your patients, during caloric irrigations, how Dr. Barany conceived the caloric test and won the Nobel Prize while being held prisoner at a concentration camp.

The following chapters on practical anatomy and physiology of the systems involved in balance function encourage the clinician to strengthen their foundational knowledge and prepare them for the dense following chapters on the various types of vestibular assessment tools.

The ever-evolving and highly relevant pediatric vestibular field is well represented with a dedicated chapter on assessment and a good overview of vestibular balance therapy for children.

Another superb addition to the third edition is Appendix I - Pathophysiology Signs and Symptoms of Dizziness. Neil Shepard lets the reader into his genius mind and guides them through the vestibular diagnostic maze, beginning with collecting a particular set of symptom descriptions. It felt genuinely validating to me, given that I spend as much time on my case history as I do on testing. He then summarizes symptoms, signs, treatment, prognosis, and lesion site for several vestibular disorders, from the most common and simple BPPV, to the more obscure and rare CANVAS. This is an invaluable resource for students and clinicians as a quick reference.

Instructors and managers will greatly appreciate Appendix III, where Shepard and Burkard discuss the value of interprofessional education and practice and provide supportive evidence towards this model of care, which aligns well with the nature of the balance system.

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