

# Services

## The use of Wii for Vestibular Rehabilitation

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The Nintendo Wii has been a popular fixture in households around the country for the young and the not-so-young. Retirement homes are realizing the exercise benefits for their residents, who may not have been able to play a round of golf or tennis in years. Now the Wii has found a new use, in the rehabilitation of vestibular disorders.

The typical treatment plan for a vestibular patient involves exercises to improve gaze stabilization and balance. Once a patient is able to perform VOR (head shaking) exercises with a busy background, the Wii would be a nice progression. Wii Fit features a tight rope activity where the patient has to keep his balance while walking on the rope and jumping over obstacles. Meanwhile, there are visual distractions, such as birds flying by. Other games include moving scenery, providing visual stimulation while simultaneously challenging balance.

The Wii Sports game includes everything from bowling to boxing. It can be used as an adjunct to traditional static and dynamic balance exercises to help prepare patients for resuming their regular activities. The integration of dynamic balance, visual stimulation and realistic arm motions in a controlled environment makes the Wii a valued component of the vestibular rehabilitation program.

In conclusion, the Wii is an exciting option in the treatment of vestibular disorders. This relatively inexpensive device provides patients with visual and balance challenges in a safe and fun environment. Our experience has been that many patients have enjoyed it so much they have gone out and gotten a unit for their home. This is a great way for them to continue with their home program. Since it is perceived as enjoyable home program compliance is improved.