



HouseCalls

House Calls with Dr. De La Flor

□ healthytenerife@gmail.com

Dear Doctor De La Flor,

I've woken up feeling dizzy several times over the past month. What might the problem be that's causing this?

CHEERS,
DAWN

Dear Dawn,

Dizziness is a word that is often used to describe two different feelings, lightheadedness or vertigo. It is important that you clearly describe your symptoms to your GP.

Lightheadedness is a feeling that you are about to faint or 'pass out'. Although you may feel dizzy, you do not feel as though you or your surroundings are moving. It often goes away or improves when you lie down. You may sometimes feel nauseated or vomit when you are lightheaded.

Vertigo is a feeling that you or your surroundings are moving when there is no actual movement. You may feel as though you are spinning, whirling, falling, or tilting. You may have trouble walking or standing, and you may lose your balance and fall.

Lightheadedness It is common to feel lightheaded from time to time. It often is caused by a momentary drop in blood pressure and blood flow to your head that occurs when you get up too quickly from a seated or lying position (orthostatic hypotension). It can be caused by: allergy or flu/colds medication as well as vomiting, diarrhea, fevers,

and other illnesses that cause dehydration. Anxiety and stress are also common causes. A more serious cause of lightheadedness is bleeding. Most of the time, the location of the bleeding and the need to seek medical care are obvious. But sometimes bleeding is not obvious (occult bleeding). Heavy menstrual bleeding also can cause this type of lightheadedness. An abnormal heart rhythm (arrhythmia) can cause fainting spells (syncope).

Vertigo occurs when there is conflict between the signals sent to the brain by various balance and position-sensing systems of the body (vision, sensory nerves, skin pressure sensation). Common causes of vertigo include: inner ear disorders (paroxysmal positional vertigo, Meniere's disease, vestibular neuritis, or labyrinthitis). Migraine headaches and decreased blood flow through the

arteries that supply blood to the base of the brain can also trigger vertigo.

Alcohol and many prescription and nonprescription medicines can cause lightheadedness or vertigo. These problems may develop from: taking too much of a medicine, alcohol and medicine interactions, misusing or abusing a medicine or alcohol, drug intoxication or the effects of withdrawal.

Dear Dr. De La Flor,

Relatives on both sides of my parents' families have Alzheimer's and I'm concerned about my mum and dad. Are there any signs that I should watch for in my parents?

SINCERELY,
BRIDGETTE



Make sure the older members of your family are getting the care they need

Dear Bridgette,

Has your mom been getting lost while running errands? Has your dad started to ask the same questions, over and over? Signs of the early stages of Alzheimer's disease aren't always clear-cut – after all, it can be hard to distinguish them from the normal memory changes that come with age.

Many people confuse Alzheimer's disease with dementia. What's the difference? Alzheimer's is a disease; dementia – which results in memory loss and disorientation – is a symptom of the disease. However, dementia isn't always caused by Alzheimer's disease; it can result from other conditions as well.

Although some memory changes are normal as you get older, memory problems that interfere with daily life are not. Common early signs of Alzheimer's disease or other dementias include:

- Short-term memory loss
- Repetition (asking the same questions, no matter how many times they're answered).
- Language problems (have profound problems remembering even basic words).
- Personality changes (sudden mood swings, becoming withdrawn or stop doing things they usually enjoy, become uncharacteristically suspicious of family members).

- Disorientation and confusion (getting lost in places they know very well, like their own neighbourhoods, have trouble completing basic and familiar tasks, like shaving).

- Odd behaviour (lack of hygiene, placing objects in odd places).

If your loved one is exhibiting any of these Alzheimer's warning signs, don't panic. Having these symptoms doesn't mean that your loved one necessarily has Alzheimer's disease. But you need to schedule an appointment with your GP for an evaluation.

Your loved one deserves a thorough exam and a clear diagnosis. Alzheimer's disease can go on a long time, and during those years you'll need to work closely with your GP. It's essential that you find a caring, sympathetic healthcare professional you trust.

Dr. De La Flor, G.P. is licensed in medicine & general surgery. He holds certificates in nutrition, medical exercise and human performance from the University of Berkeley in California, the American Council on Exercise and the U.S. National Strength & Conditioning Association. He is a strong believer in work/life balance and spends much of his time outside of his surgery on the tennis court or chasing his four kids around the neighbourhood. 00-34 - 697.888.666

World Cancer Day

Fighting cancer

February 4th, designated by the World Health Organisation as the day we celebrate the fight against cancer, once again brought a glut of articles into the news.

Prevention

According to the International Union Against Cancer (IACC), 40 per cent of the cancers which currently attack the world population's lungs, skin, cervix or colon are preventable by following a series of lifestyle advice such as not smoking and avoiding exposure to tobacco smoke, limiting the amount of alcohol consumption, avoiding excessive exposure to ultraviolet rays and maintaining a correct weight through a balanced diet and regular physical exercise.

Campaigns

The latest campaigns are aimed at young people, after all how many 50 year old smokers would have actually begun that habit had they known in their youth what they know today? The statistics on the consumption of alcohol and tobacco by young adolescents in Spain is alarming and the number of youngsters who start up dangerous lifestyle habits is increasing which is why the latest campaigns are aimed at making them aware of what they're doing to their bodies and how to prevent cancer.

Tobacco

Cancers of the lung cause the highest mortality rates in Spain out of all the cancers accounting for 12 per cent of the total amount of tumours diagnosed in the country. Non smokers and those who have no exposure to tobacco smoke are 1,000 times less likely to develop lung cancer. Experts claim that if it wasn't for tobacco, lung cancer would be a rare disease as tobacco smoke is directly responsible for 95 per cent of lung cancers, a disease which kills 20,000 people every year in Spain, 3,000 of whom are passive smokers, and a further 56,000 become ill with other smoking related illnesses.

Clínica Estética Dental Centro Implantológico

- Specialist in implantology since 1980
- Founder member of the German Society of Implantology (DGI)
- Highest quality combined with optimal aesthetics
- Masters degree in Oral Implantology
- More than 7500 implants inserted successfully in over 29 years



*A professional
multilingual team awaits you*

Tel / Fax 922 71 53 07 - www.kutniak.com
Urb. Miraverde, HLS - Center, 1ª Planta Derecha, Costa Adeje