

# Priority Topic: DIZZINESS

## Key Features:

For a single source on this topic: [Dizziness AAFP 2017](#)

1. In patients complaining of dizziness, [rule out serious cardiovascular, cerebrovascular, and other neurologic disease](#) (e.g., arrhythmia, myocardial infarction [MI], stroke, multiple sclerosis).

### *What you should study:*

✓ [Dizziness AAFP 2017](#)

- Make a complete differential diagnosis that includes serious conditions
- Consider ECG
- Perform HiNTS exam (see Key Feature 4.)
- Complete Neuro Exam

2. In patients complaining of dizziness, take a careful history to [distinguish vertigo, presyncope, and syncope](#).

### *What you should study:*

✓ [Vertigo vs Presyncope 2012](#)

3. In patients complaining of dizziness, [measure postural vital signs](#).

### **What you should study:**

✓ [Measuring Orthostatic BP CDC 2017](#)

4. Examine patients with dizziness closely for [neurologic signs](#).

### **What you should study:**

**In addition to a regular neuro exam, a HiNTS exam should be performed**

✓ [Vertigo: A Hint on the HiNTS Exam](#)

✓ [EmCrit HiNTS Exam Video](#)

5. In [hypotensive](#) dizzy patients, [exclude serious conditions](#) (e.g., MI, abdominal aortic aneurysm, sepsis, gastrointestinal bleeding) as the cause.

### **What you should study:**

✓ [Approach to dizziness in the ED 2015](#)

**Diagnose the cause of hypertension with a broad differential including emergency causes, even in the clinic setting**

6. In patients with chronic dizziness, who present with a [change in baseline symptoms](#), reassess to rule out serious causes.

7. In a dizzy patient, [review medications](#) (including prescription and over-the-counter medications) for possible reversible causes of the dizziness.

## ***What you should study:***

- ✓ [Dizziness AAFP 2017](#)

8. [Investigate further](#) those patients complaining of dizziness who have:

- Signs or symptoms of central vertigo.
- A history of trauma.
- Signs, symptoms, or other reasons (e.g., anticoagulation) to suspect a possible serious underlying cause.

## ***What you should study:***

- ✓ [Approach to Dizziness in the ED 2015](#)

**Of interest for clinical practice, but less likely to show up on the exam:**

- ✓ [PPPD Pract Neuro 2017](#)