

# What is lightheadedness?

Lightheadedness is when you **feel like fainting or about to pass out**. Some people call it **feeling woozy**. Lightheadedness is related to dizziness. Dizziness is, when you feel unsteady or are having trouble keeping your balance.

When you are feeling lightheaded, you might also have these other symptoms:

- nausea
- sweating
- vision changes such as blurring or seeing spots or lights
- feeling that your body is heavy

Dizziness and lightheadedness can be upsetting and worrying. It doesn't always mean that you have a serious medical problem.

## What causes lightheadedness?

Light-headedness can have a range of different causes. Some of the main causes are:

- dehydration(not having enough fluids in your body)
- a drop in blood pressure when you stand up quickly
- feelings of anxiety or panic
- low blood sugar
- side effects of some medicines
- a heart attack or stroke
- problems in your inner ear
- low iron levels in your blood (anaemia)

Sometimes people feel lightheaded when they have vertigo, a sense that the room is spinning. Problems in your inner ear might cause vertigo.

## When should I see my doctor?

See a doctor if your lightheadedness doesn't go away or if you continue to feel unwell. You should also seek help if your lightheadedness causes you to fall and injure yourself.

Visit the emergency department, or call 000 for an ambulance if you are lightheaded and also have any of these problems:

- have lost a lot of blood
- are numb and weak on one side
- have pain or pressure in your chest arms, jaw or back
- feel sick, cold and sweaty
- have trouble talking or are confused
- can't breathe properly
- are vomiting
- have blurred vision

## How is lightheadedness treated?

The treatment will depend on the cause of your symptoms. A doctor will ask about your symptoms and examine you. They will also check your blood pressure.

If you are very dehydrated, you might need fluids through a needle into your vein (drip).

**A doctor can look at your medicines to see if they are still right for you.**

## How can I prevent or manage lightheadedness?

If you feel lightheaded try these self-help :

- drink some water

- eat or drink something sweet
- sit or lie down - you may also find it helpful to raise your legs
- don't drive a car or operate heavy machinery until you feel better

If you feel lightheaded, be careful that you don't fall over and hurt yourself. If you are worried about falling, you can take these steps:

- Use handrails when walking up and down stairs.
- Change positions or get up slowly.
- Sit down to put on your shoes and socks.
- Practice exercises that can improve your balance.
- Remove clutter from the floor.
- Install handrails in the bathroom.

To help avoid becoming lightheaded, make sure you drink enough water throughout the day. Avoid getting too hot.