

# Vestibular Activities

The vestibular system tells your child where they are when they are moving against gravity (eg. spinning, jumping, hanging upside down, swinging), if they are moving or standing still, how fast and in what direction they are going. When your child's vestibular system is working well, they can use both sides of the body together and are able to use their brain more effectively. Information from their inner ear along with other information from the skin, muscles, joints, vision and hearing go to the brain. This information is then sent to the eyes and spinal cord where they are 'told' what to do and to the rest of the brain where it combines with other information to figure out where they are in space. The activities below can help with balance and motor coordination. They can be calming when done in a rhythmical motion or alerting when done fast (eg. spinning).

## Activities:

- Deep pressure to the body by giving big hugs, squishes, 'sit' on them, roll a ball over their trunk/legs/arms
  
- Use a therapy brush on arms, legs, trunk and back
  
- If they get too much vestibular information (eg. get car sick, don't like to climb), then try:
  - doing slow motions on a therapy ball
  - play a crawling game
  - go on a swing without moving for three seconds and follow with deep pressure. Gradually increase the time on the swing and then try moving it.
  - Slowly spin on a desk chair or sit'n spin but only as they tolerate and follow with deep pressure
  - Encourage your child to use the left hand to touch right side of body and vice versa.

**\*\*If your child becomes sweaty, has red ears or looks agitated, stop immediately and provide deep pressure. These are signs of stress. \*\***
  
- If they don't get enough vestibular information (eg. clumsy, can't cross midline, confuses right and left, doesn't do well in sports), then try:
  - swinging
  - climbing on playground equipment
  - jumping
  - going down a slide
  - spin on a desk chair, sit'n spin or astronaut board
  - Encourage your child to use the left hand to touch right side of body and vice versa.

