

Researcher investigates chronic vertigo

October 13 2014, by Jeff Renaud

Imagine living in a world where everything around you is bouncing and spinning. And it won't stop. You are constantly nauseous and dizzy. Your vision is blurry. There's hearing loss and buzzing in your ears. Going out in public is difficult, if not impossible. So too is walking, reading, watching television or using the computer. And forget driving a car or holding down a job.

This is life for sufferers of chronic [vertigo](#) – a life in [perpetual motion](#).

Meredith Levine, an award-winning multimedia journalist and a faculty member at Western University's Faculty of Information & Media Studies, has conducted an in-depth investigation of "chronic vertigo," an impairment that affects an estimated 1.5 million Canadians.

According to Levine, those suffering from chronic vertigo have damaged vestibular systems, which is the complex mechanism of the inner ear that acts as the body's internal motion detector.

Having interviewed dozens of vestibular specialists from around the world and a high number of chronic vertigo sufferers and other health care providers for the study, Levine also discovered that "chronic vertigo" is one of the fastest growing health searches on Google, alongside more prominent health searches like "migraine headache."

Levine was made aware of chronic vertigo, an impairment she says is largely underreported, in 2007 when she developed a severe vestibular disorder.

"I'm one of the lucky ones. I got better," explains Levine. "While conducting research for this project, I was shocked by how many people are suffering and struggling with vestibular conditions and so many of them are not getting the help that they need."

The project, titled Chronic Vertigo: Living in Perpetual Motion, will be launched nationally on Monday, October 13, presented as part of a multimedia platform produced by CBC News (www.cbc.ca/news) that will include radio, [television](#) and online stories.

Provided by University of Western Ontario

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