

More research needed on blast induced traumatic brain injury and vestibular pathology

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Physical therapists are calling for definitive vestibular screenings and assessment measures for US military service members with blast-induced traumatic brain injuries (BITBI). According to a Scholarly Opinion Piece in the September issue of *Physical Therapy*, the scientific journal of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), vestibular rehabilitation must be included as part of successful treatment for those who have been injured by blasts and experience vestibular symptoms such as vertigo, gaze instability, and motion intolerance.

"Because vestibular pathology affects the individual's balance and sense of motion, definitive treatment guidelines could have a tremendous impact on the success of [rehabilitation](#) for a patient with BITBI," says lead researcher US Army Captain and APTA member Matthew R. Scherer, PT, MPT, NCS.

According to Scherer, although there is limited scientific and medical literature available about the management of orthopedic, integumentary, neurocognitive, and neurobehavioral effects in survivors of blast, there is even less research addressing the vestibular symptoms of these injuries. Scherer emphasizes the need for clinicians and researchers who work with this patient population to develop screening and assessment measures that will enable them to formulate treatment strategies to reduce disability.

"The rehabilitation community has a tremendous opportunity to contribute to the growing body of knowledge by investigating mechanisms of injury and effective recovery strategies," said Scherer. "It's time to gather as much information as possible and create clinical best practices so that we can maximize the recovery of our military service members who have been injured by blasts."

Source: American [Physical Therapy](#) Association ([news](#) : [web](#))

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