

New app to monitor Meniere's Disease launched

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A new mobile app has been launched this week to help researchers develop a better understanding of a rare condition affecting the inner ear.

The tool will allow sufferers of Ménière's Disease to log details about their symptoms and see how they compare with people across the country.

Ménière's Disease affects roughly 60,000 people in the UK and can cause [tinnitus](#), hearing loss, vertigo and a feeling of pressure deep inside the ear. But reasons why people develop the condition, and how symptoms occur, remain unclear.

The study is being carried out by researchers at the University of Exeter Medical School's European Centre for Environment & Human Health, working closely with digital company Buzz Interactive, who have helped to develop the app.

The team are hoping to understand what factors influence the symptoms of Ménière's, and discover if people across the country experience similar complaints at the same time. They are also hoping to use several different types of data to understand how environmental factors, such as air pressure and humidity, can impact symptoms.

Long term Ménière's sufferer Gerald Pitts welcomed the research, saying: "It can be a very unpredictable condition that makes everyday

life difficult. One minute you can be functioning well, the next the whole room is spinning and you have no idea what set it off.

Understanding episodes like this will help me – and others with the condition – to prepare for times when symptoms might worsen."

Research lead, Dr Jess Tyrrell, said: "By collecting data on a daily basis this project will provide the crucial first step in understanding the variable nature of Ménière's. We hope this will be good news for those diagnosed with the condition, removing some of the anxiety associated with the 'unknowns' that trigger attacks."

This study builds on existing research into the disease at the Centre, which has considered the occurrence of Ménière's in the UK population.

Natasha Harrington-Benton, Director of the Meniere's Society, said: "This new mobile phone app will be a really useful tool to help our members monitor their condition, providing information that could help them manage their symptoms. It's fantastic that it will also further our understanding of a disease which has received comparatively little scientific attention."

You can take part in the research if you're over 18, have been diagnosed with Ménière's disease by your doctor, and have experienced symptoms – such as vertigo or tinnitus – in the last year.

Participants will need a smart phone or tablet, must be happy for location data to be captured, and willing to input brief information about their symptoms each day.

More information: The Monitoring Ménière's app can be downloaded from the Apple app store or Android store via these links:
itunes.apple.com/gb/app/menier...tor/id799474499?mt=8
play.google.com/store/apps/det...ve.menieres&hl=en_GB

Provided by University of Exeter

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