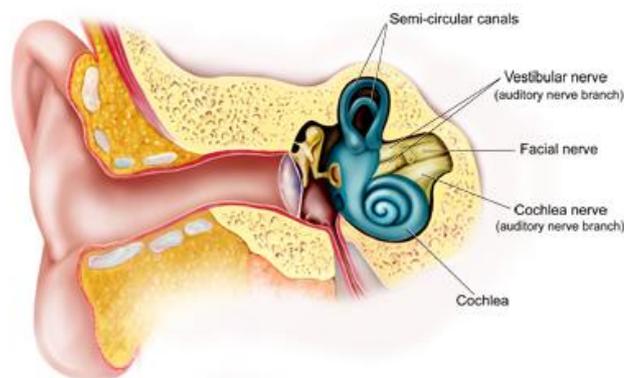


What does my inner ear have to do with my back pain?

In order for us to move through the world with ease and with the least amount of energy exchange possible, our brain needs to gather information through some key systems to know where our body is in space. After all, our brain is stored in a little black box, the skull, and the only way it has access to the outside is through your senses.

One of these systems is your inner ear, or your vestibular system. On a very simplistic level, the vestibular system's role is to orient our body in space, maintain equilibrium and postural muscle tone to preserve a constant plane of vision, and direct the gaze of the eye. Essentially, it allows us to stay upright. It's easy to take for granted what's going on behind the scenes, right?

Additionally, we get this information for our eyes, and the feedback from the receptors in our muscles, joints, skin, tendons etc. When the brain takes all this information in, it has to process it, and make a decision about what to do in order to keep you safe. How, as movement therapists does this take place in our line of work mostly? Through changes in muscle tone, speed, and accuracy of MOVEMENT!



But what happens if the brain is not receiving quality information from the vestibular system, perhaps due to past injuries, stress, poor movement habits etc. If we fall to one side, doesn't it make sense that our brain will increase tone in the muscles of the opposite side to attempt to bring us back to centre. It's mostly the job of the vestibular system to carry out this function. What if it's not doing its job, and because our brain feels as though you're always falling slightly to one side on a very subtle level, it's always holding some level of protective tension on one side? You may perceive this as that cranky back or hip that never improves despite repeated stretching. Or that tight neck and shoulder that never seems to settle no matter how many therapists I see?

This constant tug of war taking place at a higher level is being expressed in your muscles! But your muscles aren't the issue! What if there was an easy way to assess these higher order systems, and integrate them simply into your current approach. At IKN, that's our main goal. To give you the tools to address these higher order systems in a way that makes

sense to your clients, and in a way that you can make your own. Make it unique to you, and unique to your clients' program. See you at a course soon!