Our rehabilitation team consists of physical, occupational and recreational therapists as well as speech pathologists and audiologists. We work with a patient’s physician, nurses and other health care professionals to provide a coordinated approach to care in both the inpatient and outpatient settings.

Our services include general acute hospital care, and for appropriate diagnoses, a dedicated rehabilitation unit within the hospital. We provide personalized, comprehensive care for adults and children recovering from surgery, stroke, and neurological, cognitive and musculoskeletal conditions. For patients and families coping with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease), we offer the region’s only ALS Center and equipment loan closet.

St. Peter’s offers a full continuum of rehabilitative care, from inpatient, to outpatient, to home-based care. Patients requiring care after discharge may receive rehabilitation services at either of our two outpatient settings or, if appropriate, in their home setting. For patients who are not yet ready to return home, St. Peter’s also offers rehabilitative services at St. Peter’s Nursing & Rehabilitation Center located on the hospital campus and Our Lady of Mercy Life Center located in Guilderland.
More than 90 million American teenagers and adults have had problems with balance or dizziness. These problems can cause people to fall, or feel disoriented, confused and anxious. The Vestibular Rehabilitation Program at St. Peter’s Hospital is dedicated to helping individuals who have these disorders remain active and meet daily physical challenges more safely.

With nearly a decade of experience in balance and dizziness disorders, patients can rely on our team of health care professionals to provide the highest quality health care. Our team at St. Peter’s Rehabilitation Center uses proven techniques to identify and treat specific balance and movement problems. Our patients benefit from programs that are focused on their individual needs, including rehabilitation, education and improving their overall well-being.

What is Vestibular Rehabilitation?
The vestibular system is a part of the inner ear that helps to control balance. If your inner ear is damaged by disease or injury, you may benefit from vestibular rehabilitation. Vestibular rehabilitation is an exercise-based therapy program used to treat balance and dizziness disorders. It is based on the body’s natural ability to compensate for balance problems. Certain exercises strengthen this ability, and with a focused exercise routine, patients can improve their balance.

A therapist will evaluate each patient and perform tests in order to develop an individualized treatment plan which may include:

- **Balance retraining and balance strategies:** helping the body to regain balance through a variety of exercises and techniques.
- **Sensory organization techniques and gaze stabilization strategies:** helping the body to use its senses to overcome dizziness and decreased balance.
- **Habituation exercises:** helping the body to decrease dizziness by repeatedly exposing it to a stimulus.
- **Canalith Repositioning maneuver:** a maneuver performed by the therapist to manipulate the calcium crystals found in the inner ear.
- **Individualized home exercise program:** an exercise program patients can do at home, based on each patient’s individual needs.

What Diagnostic Tests Are Performed?
Balance is affected by the way the central nervous system uses information from the inner ear, the eyes, the muscles, and the sensation of the lower extremities. A therapist trained in vestibular rehabilitation evaluates:

- **Functional limitations:** tasks a person is unable to do because of balance problems.
- **Sensory integration:** the way the body interprets information from the senses.
- **Gaze stability:** the ability of the body to visually focus.
- **Static and dynamic balance:** the ability to balance with and without movement.
- **Positional testing:** testing a patient’s response to a variety of positions, i.e. sitting, lying down, etc.

Who Will Benefit From Vestibular Rehabilitation?
The Vestibular Rehabilitation Program offers treatments for a wide variety of conditions that result in balance problems and dizziness. Some of these include:

- **Labyrinthitis:** inflammation of the labyrinth (the inner part of the ear that controls balance).
- **Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV):** caused by calcium crystals floating in the ear as the result of a blow to the head, or weakened and collapsed hair cells that release calcium crystals into the ear.

- **Perilymph Fistula:** caused by intense pressure in the inner ear, or a blow to the head, which results in a hole between the middle and inner ear.
- **Drug-Induced Ototoxicity:** damage to the hair cells of the inner ear, caused by long-term intravenous use of certain types of drugs.
- **Acoustic Neuroma:** slow-growing tumor of the eighth cranial nerve, which can be corrected by surgery.
- **Meniere’s Disease:** over-accumulation of fluid in the inner ear that causes attacks of vertigo, ringing in the ear, and fluctuating hearing loss.
- **Migrainous Vertigo:** dizziness associated with the auras (light and sound sensitivities) of a migraine headache.

To Make An Appointment
A written referral or prescription from a physician is required to make an appointment at St. Peter’s Outpatient Physical Rehabilitation Center. Most types of insurance are accepted for the Vestibular Rehabilitation Program.