

Why do I get dizzy when I spin around?



You spin around and around, and then you stop. But the room keeps on spinning!
Why do you get dizzy?



Why?

1. Your sense of balance lives deep inside your ears.

It tells you which way is up, and whether you are moving. In there are three little loops. Each one is a tube filled with liquid, with tiny hairs inside.

2. When you turn your head, the liquid bends the tiny hairs.

The liquid lags behind and bends the hairs. They send a message to your brain, "Hey, we are turning!" When you spin round and round, the liquid soon catches up and spins along with you.

3. When you stop, the liquid keeps swirling.

It bends the tiny hairs the other way, so your ears tell your brain, "We are still turning!" But your eyes say, "No, we are standing still!" Your brain gets two different messages at once and gets mixed up. That mixed-up feeling is being dizzy.

Try it! Swirl a cup of water

You need: a cup, some water, and a few tiny bits of paper

1. Fill a cup halfway with water, and drop in a few tiny bits of paper.
2. Swirl the cup around a few times, then set it down.
3. The cup has stopped. But look! Does the water keep going around?

What happened? That is just what happens inside your ears after you stop spinning.

Video + more questions:
whywhywhykids.com/dizzy



scan with a grown-up