



## MdDS Foundation

Dedicated to finding the cause  
and cure for MdDS

### Mal de Débarquement Syndrome (MdDS)

Also called: Disembarkment Syndrome, Rocking Vertigo



Mal de Débarquement Syndrome is a neurological disorder that leaves patients feeling as if they are rocking, bobbing, or swaying. **It can be diagnosed and managed.**

#### Symptoms of MdDS

- ✓ Constant sense of motion **as if on a boat**, such as **rocking, bobbing** and **swaying**.
- ✓ Sensation of being in motion **lasting for months to years** which may be accompanied by:
  - unsteadiness
  - sense of unstable ground
  - fatigue
  - difficulty concentrating
  - anxiety
  - visual motion intolerance
- ✗ It is not spinning or rotational vertigo.

#### ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Code R42

#### Diagnosing MdDS

No tests can provide a definitive diagnosis of MdDS. Diagnosis may be made by asking these questions:

- ✓ Did you recently travel on a ship, boat, train or other motion experience?
- ✓ Do you still feel like you are rocking and swaying and the only time it stops is when you are in motion (e.g.: driving or riding in a car)?



A key diagnostic indicator is that symptoms often temporarily remit when the patient is back in motion.

Mal de Débarquement Syndrome is indexed in the ICD-10-CM under Billing Code R42.

**Innovative treatment options are on the horizon.**  
[mddsfoundation.org/research](http://mddsfoundation.org/research)

 [mddsfoundation.org](http://mddsfoundation.org)

 [connect@mddsfoundation.org](mailto:connect@mddsfoundation.org)

## Duration

Symptoms may be quite disabling and can persist for months...



... even years.

## Classic and Spontaneous Onset

air

boat

car/  
train

spont.

other

Diagnosis is based primarily on clinical history, such as recent travel, but patients may also develop the syndrome without a motion trigger.

## Treating MdDS

- ✓ Clinical studies have identified areas of the brain involved in MdDS.\*
- ✓ Patients may find some relief from symptoms with benzodiazepines, SNRIs, some SSRIs and less often tricyclic antidepressants.
- ✗ At present there are no treatments or therapies proven to be universally helpful to those suffering from MdDS.
- ✗ Anticholinergic medications for typical forms of dizziness are not effective for either prevention or treatment of MdDS.

## References

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**Clark BC**, Leporte A, Clark S, Hoffman RL, Quick A, Wilson TE, Thomas JS. Effects of persistent Mal de débarquement syndrome on balance, psychological traits, and motor cortex excitability. *J Clin Neurosci.* 20:446-450, **2013**.

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