

# An interview with Tatjana Tomanovic

## Facts:

**The Hearing and Balance Clinic at Karolinska University Hospital is the only one of its kind in Sweden.**

At the Hearing and Balance Clinic, diagnostics, habilitation and rehabilitation of hearing and balance disorders takes place, with specialist competence within medicine, technical solutions, pedagogy and psychosocial care.

**Diagnostics, Solna/Diagnostics, Huddinge** receives children and adults in all ages for the elucidation of hearing, tinnitus or dizziness problems. Newborn children are hearing tested with so-called screening audiometry.

**Hearing habilitation Child and Youth, Rosenlund Hospital** fits new hearing aids and gives pedagogical help to children and youth from 0-20 years.

**Hearing rehabilitation Adults, Rosenlund Hospital** conducts advanced hearing rehabilitation for adults.

**Alternative telephoning** offers an alternative telephone for persons who due to functional impairment cannot hear or talk in a normal telephone. The department is part of Hearing Rehabilitation Adults, Rosenlund Hospital.

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**Photo:** Tatjana Tomanovic. Chief Physician Tatjana Tomanovic, M.D. Ph.D. is a specialist in hearing and balance problems at the Hearing and Balance Clinic, Diagnostic unit. Karolinska University Hospital, Solna.

**The Ménière patients who respond the best toward Salovum are those with fluctuating hearing, something that points in particular to a disturbance of fluid homeostasis in the ear, says Tatjana Tomanovic.**

Patients for the Hearing and Balance Clinic come mainly from the Stockholm region but we also receive patients on special referral from the whole country, Tatjana Tomanovic tells us. It could be severe cases; patients with enduring problems and patients for review and elucidation. All together about 150 employees are part of the Hearing and Balance Clinic, audiologists, counsellors, psychologists, pedagogues and 15-20 doctors.

**Are patients with Ménière disease the largest group?**

Both yes and no. In sheer volume, the largest patient group is those with positional vertigo so-called “ear rocks”. Patients with Ménière’s disease are almost as many but more often have revisits and need significantly more care.

**Ménière's disease is characterised by attacks of dizziness, hearing impairment on one ear, a feeling of fullness and pressure and tinnitus. The severity of the problem is measured on a 6-degree scale, Functional Level Scale, in use since 1995. Level 6 on the scale is disability and 1 is very mild symptoms. Is this scale among your tools?**

Absolutely! Functional Level Scale is often used e.g. when we need to measure the severity of dizziness, especially before and after treatment with gentamycin.

**National quality registries are quality tools that give Sweden unique opportunities to develop quality in care. One of the latest additions is National quality registry for Morbus Ménière. Do you use the registry in your research?**

Our professional association SNOF, (Swedish Neuro-Otological Association), that works with vertigo disorders has taken the initiative for this register which helps us with better monitoring and treatment of our patients and makes our research easier.

We also have a well-developed journaling system which when it comes to Ménière patients is a very important tool.

All patient research uses inclusion criterias; one decides within a study which age groups, the degree of disease severity that should be studied etc. By Ménière's disease the severity can be difficult to establish since it varies over time. Patients often move on the Functional Level Scale. In this case the journals give a better picture.

**Do you have any treatment experience with Antisecretory Factor in the form of Salovum® and SPC-Flakes®?**

I have about 20 patients on Salovum and probably even more on SPC-Flakes. I can monitor the patients who are on Salovum, which is on prescription, while the patients on SPC-Flakes buy it at the pharmacy themselves.

**Patients with inflammatory bowel diseases who are given Salovum have now and then been able to get rid of all medication. Have you seen the same development in Ménière's patients?**

Yes, I have patients who are doing well only on Salovum. The patients who respond the best to Salovum are those with fluctuating uneven hearing, something that points in particular to a disturbance of fluid homeostasis in the ear. I have received letters from patients who are very happy with Salovum. The Hearing- and Balance Clinic Karolinska University Hospital would like very much to start a concrete Salovum study on a larger scale on patients with Ménière's disease.