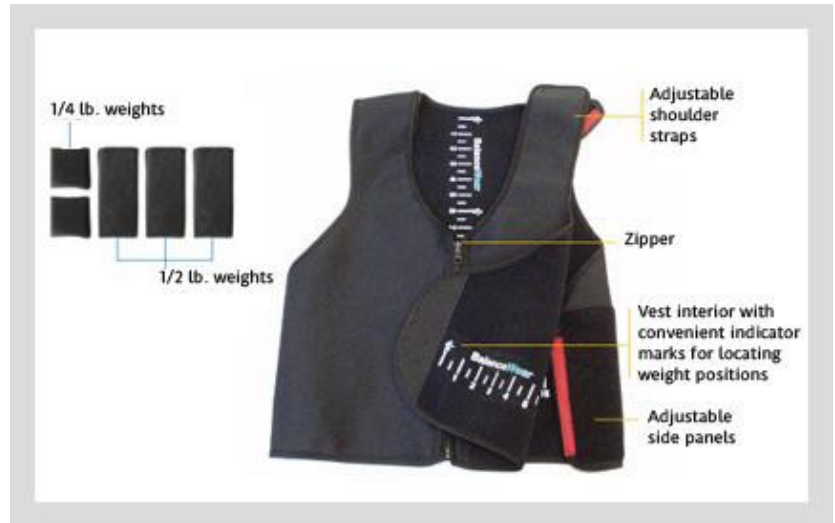


Weighted Gait Vest

by Dan Reynolds

Many people expressed interest in Dee's "OW 200 BalanceWear™ Weighted Gait Vest," by Motion Therapeutics. This brief article is intended to provide some basic information on her experience and the vest. A statement on their web site states: "NOTE: BalanceWear is not a medical treatment or cure for any disease."¹ The marketing material indicates you will need a prescription.

Dee was first diagnosed with SpinoCerebellar Ataxia and found references to the vest in a Facebook™ support group. She had been diagnosed with an unknown type of ataxia (there are currently over 60 identified types of ataxia, however many people with ataxia have not been typed), this was before she was diagnosed with NPC1. She has always been extremely independent and was looking for something to help her maintain her mobility. She is very unsteady and is prone to falling if she is not wearing her vest. With the vest she still stumbles occasionally, but not as often, and not as severely.



According to the Motion Therapeutics' web site the vest may be appropriate for individuals with: MS, Parkinson's, Ataxia, Stroke, Scoliosis, Low back problems, and the Elderly who fall.² The vests are not recommended for people with G-tubes.

We chose a Physical Therapist in Charlottesville, VA. Because the vest requires a prescription, and because fitting and adjusting the vest requires a Physical Therapy session – at the technician's location - we had to work with our insurance company. She provided supporting documentation to her primary care doctor, who wrote the prescription, but still needed the referral. I'm retired military, so she had to work with Tri-Care to get that referral. Since UVA-Health South was not in our network, she needed to convince the Referral staff that she needed the vest. I think what convinced them is that a \$1,000 vest that may prevent a broken hip from a fall was a very good investment, compared to treatment costs for a broken hip. As many were able to see at the conference, they acquiesced. The whole process did take few months.

¹ <http://www.motiontherapeutics.com/>

² <http://www.motiontherapeutics.com/faqs/>

Based upon the web site these locations have certified technicians (current as of Aug 2019):

Alabama: Birmingham

Arkansas: Fayetteville, Searcy

California: Berkeley, Chico, Downey, El Segundo, Fresno, Irvine, Laguna Hills, Oroville, Oakland, Pleasanton, Pomona, Redding, Roseville, Salinas, San Francisco, Seal Beach, Walnut Creek, Westlake Village, Vallejo

Colorado: Aurora, Englewood, Fort Collins, Greeley, Lakewood, Longmont

Connecticut: Trumbull

Florida: Fort Myers, Naples, Miami, Orlando

Georgia: Atlanta

Illinois: Glenview, Springfield

Indiana: Indianapolis (*Local patients only*)

Kansas: Overland Park

Kentucky: La Grange, Lexington, Nicholasville

Maryland: Baltimore

Michigan: Muskegon

Mississippi: Flowood, Jackson

Nebraska: Omaha, Laurel

New Jersey: Ramsey, Sea Girt, Wayne, Woodbury Heights (*Local Patients only*)

New Mexico: Albuquerque

New York: Fulton, New York, Patchogue, West Haverstraw

North Carolina: Durham, Fletcher

North Dakota: Fargo

Ohio: Centerville, Toledo, Hillard

Oklahoma: Edmond, Tulsa

Oregon: Tigard

Pennsylvania: Bala Cynwyd, Harrisburg, King of Prussia, Malvern, Montoursville, Philadelphia, Radnor, Springfield, Wayne

Texas: Austin, Round Rock, San Antonio

Virginia: Charlottesville, Richmond (new)

Wisconsin: Milwaukee, Waukesha (*Need to be state resident*)

As you can see, not all areas are covered.³

As with all aspects of these diseases, your results may vary. BalanceWear is not the only weighted gait vest available. This article is intended to convey our experience and is not a recommendation for treatment.

If you are interested in further information about the vest, this link may provide what you are looking for: <http://www.motiontherapeutics.com/faqs/>

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³ ibid