

Understanding dizziness caused by Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)

Leicester Balance Centre

Hearing Services

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What is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)?

BPPV is a common cause of dizziness. Symptoms include spinning or dizziness caused by moving your head. It is an inner ear problem. Small crystals (otoconia) move from an area where they help our balance to an area that should be free from these crystals (the semi-circular canals).

What causes it?

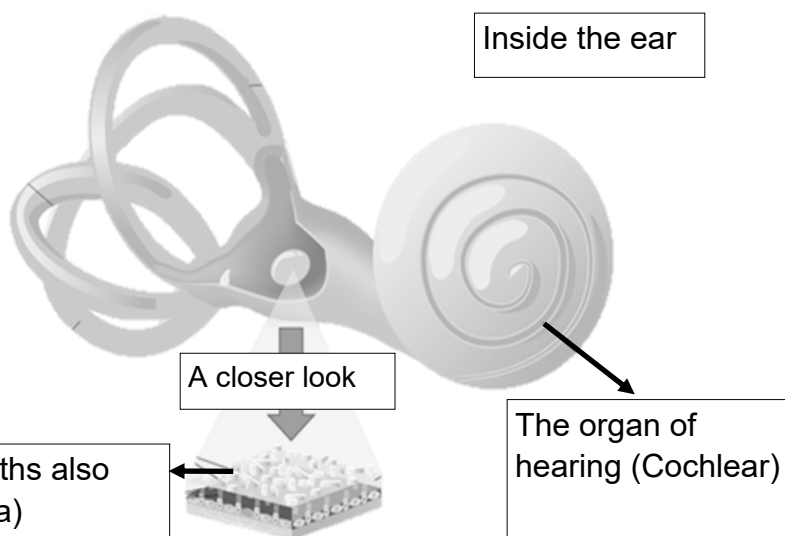
BPPV is more common as you get older or if you have an inner ear infection, migraine or Meniere's Disease.

It can occur after a head injury. It is not always possible to find the cause.

Diagnosing BPPV

The balance organs in the ears work with the eyes to keep stable vision. If the crystals are in the wrong place we can find eye movements when your head is moved. Sometimes video goggles are used to help us see these movements.

Crystals (Otoliths also called otoconia)



Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice

Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

Treating BPPV

The crystals can be moved by moving the head. It is like moving a ball through a maze. Around 8 out of 10 people feel improvement after 1 treatment. Sometimes more treatments are needed.

A number of manoeuvres that move the head into a variety of positions can be used to move the tiny loose particles around the inner ear so that they no longer move to give you symptoms of BPPV.

The treatment is different for each canal. Your doctor or audiologist will tell you where your crystals are and what treatment has been done.

The Epley Manoeuvre is one such treatment.

Tests and treatments can be done on a couch or using a TRV chair (as shown in the picture). Using a chair can be helpful if you have problems moving.

After treatment it can sometimes help to do the following:

- Sleep propped up for 2 nights with 3 or 4 pillows.
- Do not tilt your head back (looking up at ceiling) or forwards (looking down at floor/feet) for 2 days.

Some people do feel a little unwell or unsteady for a few days after treatment. Your doctor/audiologist may also ask you to do exercises at home to help with your recovery.

Can I get BPPV again even after treatment?

BPPV can return. If this happens often and stops you from being able to do daily tasks an operation to block (occlude) one of the semi-circular canals may help. Talk about this with your doctor.

A daily vitamin D supplement may lower the chance of BPPV returning. It is also important to keep active and move your head to help settle any dizziness.

At home treatments

If your BPPV does not get better quickly or returns after treatment you can try the following exercise at home. You should be able to lie down and move your neck comfortably.

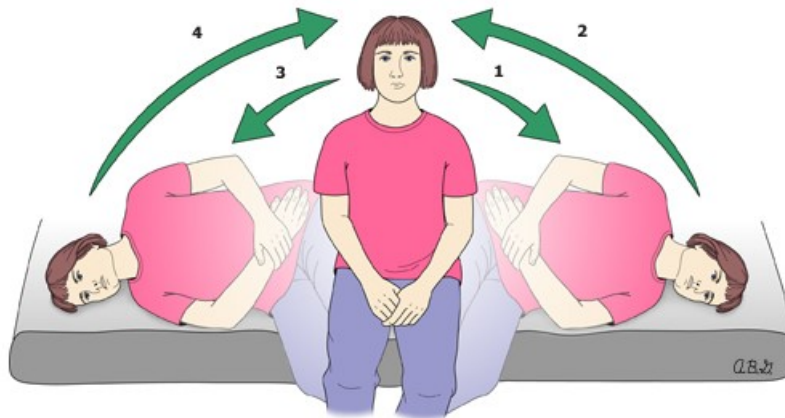
You should not feel tingling in the arms, a feeling of faintness or double vision with these movements.

You may feel dizzy and see the room moving when completing the exercises.



Brandt-Daroff exercise

1. Sit on the side of a bed in the middle.
2. Turn your head as far as is comfortable towards your left shoulder.
3. Lie down on your right side.
4. Count to 30 then sit back up.
5. Turn your head as far as is comfortable towards your right shoulder.
6. Lie down on your left side.
7. Count to 30 then sit back up.
8. Repeat this 10 times. Do this 2 times a day for 2 weeks.



Contact us

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Feedback

We welcome your feedback.

Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/LeicesterBalanceCentre> or scan the QR code to go to our feedback form.

Hospital: Leicester Royal Infirmary

Type of clinic: Balance/Hearing LRI

Ward/clinic: Balance Clinic LRI



