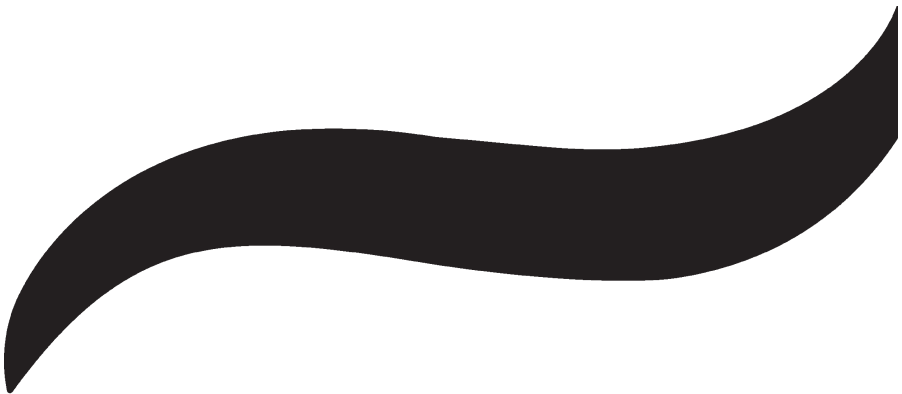




BPPV

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

Information Sheet
Physiotherapy Department



WHAT IS BPPV?

Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV) is an inner ear problem that causes short periods of vertigo when your head is moved in certain positions. It occurs most commonly when lying down, turning over in bed, and looking up. Even though you are still, you may feel like you are moving, or that the room is moving around you. You may also experience nausea, vomiting, sweating, and abnormal eye movements.

WHAT CAUSES BPPV?

BPPV occurs when small crystals of calcium carbonate, commonly referred to as rocks, shift in the inner ear and/or fall into another area within the balance canals. The crystals may shift for many reasons, such as, an inner ear infection, fever, concussion, or whiplash injury. BPPV can also occur along with other conditions of the inner ear such as Meniere's disease, migraines; or, it has been suggested that it is part of the "normal" aging process. The exact cause of this is unknown in some cases.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Most people recover following "specific neck manoeuvres" which can be performed by qualified healthcare staff. This treatment aims to move the crystals back into place. Occasionally, if the problem has been there for a while we need to add in other exercises or repeat the manoeuvre to allow your system to return to normal. After the treatment is complete, you may feel nauseous, dizzy, or have more trouble balancing than before. This can last for several hours but should settle if you follow the aftercare advice.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER TREATMENT?

For 24 hours after treatment, you should not:

- ❖ turn your head quickly
- ❖ tilt your head far up, (as if looking to the sky)
- ❖ look down, (as if bending down to tie your shoes, or picking something up from the floor)

You can sleep that night in whatever position you choose, but try not to be particularly flat. **You should continue your normal activity and move your head as normally as possible after the first 24 hours.**

WILL IT COME BACK?

You may experience a recurrence of symptoms in the future; there is no proven medication that can prevent this condition. If you experience BPPV symptoms in the future, you should ask your GP to refer you back to the vestibular clinic. The crystals may be in a different place, so your treatment may be different than before.

You should never try to put the crystals back on your own unless instructed by your healthcare provider.

Remember, BPPV is treatable and the manoeuvres and exercises can greatly reduce your vertigo and other symptoms associated with BPPV.

For more information on BPPV please see our website
<https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/ vestibular-physiotherapy/>

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Pub. date:	December 2021
Review date:	December 2023
Issue No:	02
Department:	Physiotherapy
Clinical Lead:	

PIL.BPPVIS.19_33632.L
21_23267