

Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

What is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo?

Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, also called BPPV, is an inner ear problem that causes you to suddenly feel dizzy when you move your head in a certain direction or roll over in bed. You might feel like the room is spinning around in circles. You might feel nausea at the same time. The nausea and dizziness go away in a few seconds. BPPV is bothersome, but it won't hurt you.

What causes BPPV?

BPPV may be caused by a blockage of fluid in the balance centers in your inner ears. The blockage might be made of tiny "stones."

How is BPPV diagnosed?

Your doctor may suspect BPPV if you feel dizzy when you move your head certain ways. Several tests can help your doctor tell if your dizziness is caused by BPPV.

How is BPPV treated?

Your doctor can show you some easy head movements that move the stones causing the blockage. The movements of your head can stop the symptoms and may keep the dizziness from coming back. You may also be given medicine to treat the nausea and dizziness.

This handout provides a general overview on this topic and may not apply to everyone. To find out if this handout applies to you and to get more information on this subject, talk to your family doctor.

Visit familydoctor.org for more useful information on this and many other health-related topics.

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