

Patient information factsheet

Brandt-Daroff exercises to treat BPPV

We have written this factsheet to give you more information about benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV). It explains what BPPV is, what the Brandt-Daroff exercise treatment method is and how to perform these exercises safely at home. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

What is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)?

BPPV is a common cause of dizziness. It occurs in people of all ages but is more common in middle-aged and elderly people. It causes short bursts of intense dizziness when the body or head is placed in certain positions such as lying on one side in bed or looking upwards. People can feel sick and are sometimes unsteady for a few hours after the dizziness has gone away.

Benign – this means the cause of dizziness is not a threat to your health.

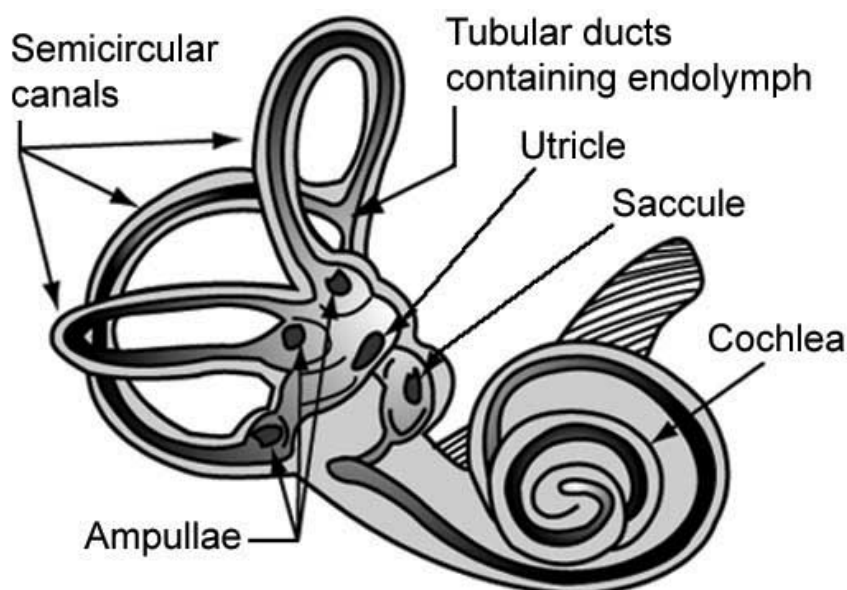
Paroxysmal – the dizziness comes in short bursts.

Positional – the dizziness is provoked by certain body or head positions.

Vertigo – the medical name for the spinning sensation.

What causes BPPV?

There is a collection of tiny crystals inside your ear. They have a valuable role to play when they are in the correct position. BPPV occurs when the crystals are dislodged from their correct position. They move into one or more of the semi-circular canals and either continue to float around or become attached to another part of the ear.



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Once the crystals are loose, putting your head into certain positions can cause the crystals to move, making your brain think you are moving even though you are not. If you stay in the position which makes you dizzy, the crystals will settle and the dizziness will wear off.

The crystals can become dislodged from their normal position for a number of reasons. These include a head injury or an infection of the inner ear. More commonly it happens for no reason.

BPPV usually occurs in one ear, but some people can have it in both ears at the same time.

How is BPPV treated?

Brandt-Daroff exercises

Brandt-Daroff exercises are a series of simple movements that can help stop the dizzy spells that people with BPPV experience. It is not clear why the exercises work. Some evidence suggests that the exercises help to relocate the loose crystals that cause the dizziness in the first place. However, other evidence suggests that repeated exposure to the feeling of dizziness reduces its intensity.

You can perform these exercises in your own home.

How do I perform the Brandt-Daroff exercises?

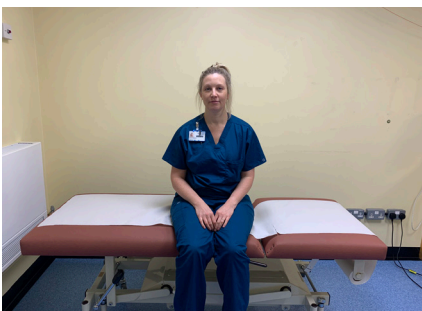
We recommend that you have a friend or family member present the first few times you perform these exercises to help you in case you become unsteady. If you would like to watch a video of how to perform the exercises, please visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=voZXtUdQ00&feature=youtu.be

To perform these exercises, you will need to follow the steps below:

1. Start the exercises by sitting upright on the edge of a bed.
2. Turn your head 45 degrees to the left (or as far as is comfortable).
3. Quickly lie down on your right-hand side. Remain in this position for 30 seconds (or until you no longer feel dizzy).
4. Sit up and turn your head back to a central position (facing forwards).
5. Turn your head 45 degrees to the right (or as far as is comfortable).
6. Quickly lie down on your left-hand side. Remain in this position for 30 seconds (or until you no longer feel dizzy). Sit up and turn your head back to a central position (facing forwards).

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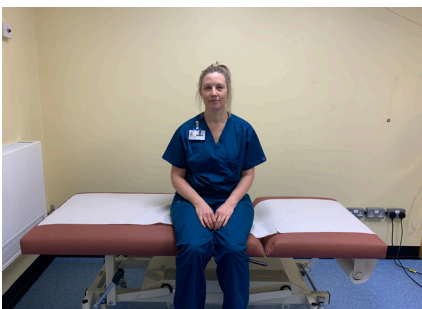
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The above steps make up one repetition. These exercises should be performed in a set of five repetitions. They should also be performed three times a day for two weeks.

We recommend following the schedule below every day for two weeks:

- Morning: five repetitions
- Afternoon: five repetitions
- Evening: five repetitions

If you are still feeling dizzy after two weeks of performing these exercises, you may require a further appointment.

Are there any risks?

You are likely to feel dizzy while doing the exercises. It is important to make sure you are in a safe environment when you do the exercises, so you can't fall or hurt yourself.

Are there any alternatives to the Brandt-Daroff exercises?

There are alternative manoeuvres that can be used to treat BPPV, such as the Epley manoeuvre. Your specialist may perform the Epley manoeuvre with you in clinic and then recommend Brandt-Daroff exercises for you to use at home, as these are easier to perform unsupervised.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

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