



Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)

You came to the emergency department with vertigo, a spinning feeling. The doctor found that it is most likely BPPV, a common inner ear problem. It is not dangerous and usually gets better on its own. This sheet explains how to cope and when to come back.

What is it?

Inside your inner ear are tiny crystals that help with balance. In BPPV, some crystals move to the wrong place. When you move your head, for example turning in bed, lying down or looking up, you feel the room spin for less than a minute. You may feel sick. BPPV often settles within days to weeks, and it can come back.

Looking after yourself at home

- Move slowly. Sit on the edge of the bed for a minute before you stand up.
- Keep a light on at night and clear things you could trip over at home.
- Do any head exercises the doctor showed you, as often as you were told.
- Do not drive, climb ladders or use dangerous machines while you still get spinning spells.
- Keep active. Normal movement helps your balance system recover faster.

Medicines

- Anti-sickness tablets may help for a day or two. Take them only as your doctor told you or as the packet says.
- Do not take them for long, as they can slow your recovery.

Follow-up

- See your family doctor or health centre if the spinning is not better within 2 weeks.
- See your family doctor if it keeps coming back. Treatment moves can be repeated.

Come back to the emergency department or call an ambulance straight away if:

- Weakness, numbness or drooping on one side of the face or body
- Slurred speech, new double vision or loss of vision
- Being unable to walk or stand without falling
- A sudden, severe headache or neck pain
- Dizziness that is constant and does not change with head movement
- Vomiting so much that you cannot keep fluids down
- Sudden hearing loss in one ear



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This leaflet is general information to support the advice your doctor or nurse gave you today. It does not replace their advice. If you are worried, seek medical help.

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