

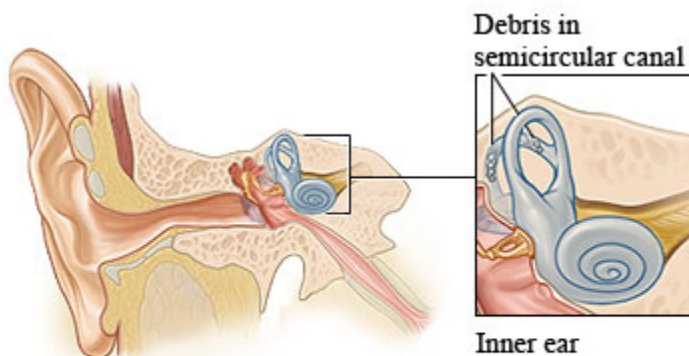


# CARE INSTRUCTIONS

KAISER PERMANENTE

## Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV): After Your Visit

### Your Kaiser Permanente Care Instructions



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Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, also called BPPV, is an inner ear problem that causes a spinning or whirling sensation when you move your head. This sensation is called vertigo. The vertigo usually lasts for less than a minute. People often have vertigo spells for a few weeks, and then the vertigo goes away. But it may come back again. The vertigo may be mild, or it may be bad enough to cause nausea.

Tiny calcium "stones" inside your inner ear canals help you keep your balance. Normally, when you move a certain way—such as when you stand up or turn your head—these stones move around. But things like infection or inflammation can stop the stones from moving like they should. This sends a false message to your brain and causes vertigo.

Some medicines that are given to decrease vertigo—such as diazepam (Valium), meclizine, and scopolamine—may slow the brain's ability to adjust to and overcome BPPV. They should be avoided if possible. Certain exercises, can help decrease vertigo.

## Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV): After Your Visit (page 2)

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

### How can you care for yourself at home?

- If your doctor treated you with a Semont or Epley maneuver, you may need to restrict your head movements for about a day:
  - Do not tip your head too far up or down.
  - Sleep with your head propped up with two or more pillows. If you must sleep on your side, keep the ear that is causing the problem facing the ceiling.
- If your doctor suggests Brandt-Daroff exercises:
  - Sit on the edge of a bed or sofa and quickly lie down on the side that causes the worst vertigo. Lie on your side with your ear down.
  - Stay in this position for at least 30 seconds or until the vertigo goes away.
  - Sit up. If this causes vertigo, wait for it to stop.
  - Repeat the procedure on the other side.
  - Repeat this 10 times. Do these exercises 2 times a day until the vertigo is gone.

### When should you call for help?

**Call 911** anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You have signs of a stroke. These may include:
  - Sudden numbness, paralysis, or weakness in your face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body.
  - New problems with walking or balance.
  - Sudden vision changes.
  - Drooling or slurred speech.
  - New problems speaking or understanding simple statements, or feeling confused.
  - A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

## Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV): After Your Visit (page 3)

- You have new or worse nausea and vomiting.
- You have hearing changes, such as hearing loss or ringing or roaring in your ears.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have problems doing the exercises.
- Your vertigo has not improved after using these exercises for a few weeks.
- Your vertigo gets worse.
- You develop new numbness, weakness, or loss of vision.

### Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://www.kp.org>

Enter P372 in the search box to learn more about **"Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV): After Your Visit"**.

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