

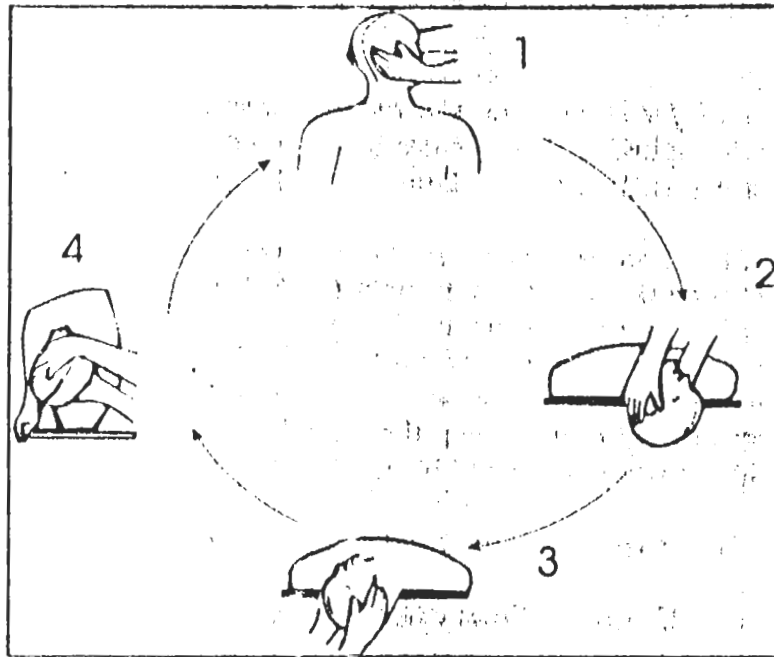
# OFFICE TREATMENT OF BPPV

## (The Epley and Semont Maneuvers)

There are two treatments of BPPV that are usually performed in the doctor's office. Both are very effective, with roughly an 80% cure rate, according to a study by Herdman and others (1993).

The maneuvers are named after their inventors. They are both intended to move debris or "ear rocks" out of the sensitive back part of the ear (posterior canal) to a less sensitive location. Both maneuvers take about 15 minutes to accomplish. The **Semont maneuver** (also called the "liberatory" maneuver) involves a procedure whereby the patient is rapidly moved

from lying on one side to the other. The **Epley maneuver** (also called the particle repositioning, canalith repositioning procedure, and modified liberatory maneuver) is shown in the figure above. It involves sequential movement of the head into four positions. The recurrence rate for BPPV after these maneuvers is about 5 percent, and in some instances a second treatment may be necessary.



Epley Maneuver

After either of these maneuvers, you should be prepared to follow the instructions below, which are aimed at reducing the chance that debris might fall back into the sensitive back part of the ear.

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS AFTER OFFICE TREATMENTS (Epley or Semont Maneuvers)

1. *Wait for 10 minutes after the maneuver is performed before going home. This is to avoid "quick spins," or brief bursts of vertigo as debris re-positions itself immediately after the maneuver. Don't drive home yourself; have someone else drive you.*

2. *Sleep semi-recumbent for the next two days. This means sleep with your head halfway between being flat and upright (a 45 degree angle). This is most easily done by using a recliner chair or by using pillows arranged on a couch. During the day, try to keep your head vertical. You must not go to the hairdresser or dentist. No exercise which requires head movement. When men shave under their chins, they should bend their bodies forward in order to keep their head vertical. If eyedrops are required, try to put them in without tilting the head back. Shampoo only under the shower.*

3. *For at least 1 week, avoid provoking head positions that might bring this on again.*

Use two pillows when you sleep.

Avoid sleeping on the "bad" side.

Don't turn your head far up or far down.

Be careful to avoid head-extended position, in which you are lying on your back, especially with your head turned towards the bad side. This means be cautious at the beauty parlor, dentist's office, and if having minor surgery done. Ask them to keep you as upright as possible. If appropriate, exercises for low-back pain should be stopped for a week. No "sit-ups" for at least one week. No "crawl" swimming. (Breast stroke is OK.)

Avoid far head-forward positions such as might occur in certain exercises (i.e. touching the toes).

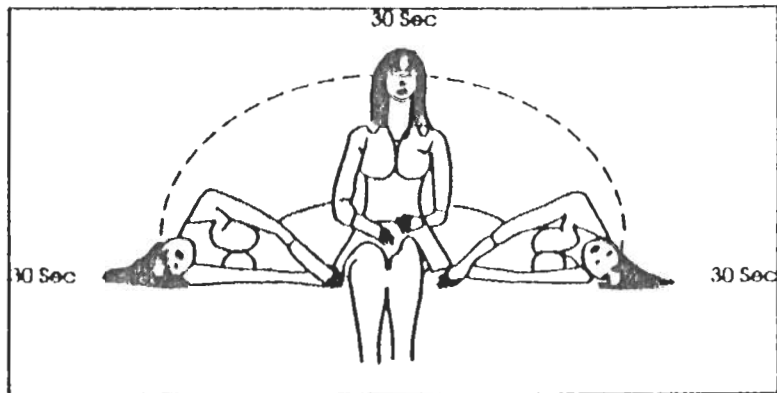
4. *At one week after treatment, put yourself in the position that usually makes you dizzy. Position yourself cautiously and under conditions in which you can't fall or hurt yourself. Let your doctor know how you did.*

**WHAT IF THE MANEUVERS DON'T WORK?** These maneuvers don't always work (only 80% of the time), and if they don't, then your doctor may wish you to proceed with the Brandt-Daroff exercises, as described below. If a maneuver works but symptoms recur or the response is only partial, another trial of the maneuver might be advised.

# HOME TREATMENT OF BPPV

## (Brandt-Daroff Exercises)

The Brandt-Daroff Exercises are a second method of treating BPPV, usually used when the office treatment fails. They succeed in 95% of cases but are more arduous. These exercises are performed in three sets per day for two weeks. In each set, one performs the maneuver below five times.



Brandt-Daroff Exercises

1 rep = maneuver done to each side in turn (takes 2 minutes)

Suggested Schedule:

Time	Exercise	Duration
Morning	5 reps	10 min
Noon	5 reps	10 min
Evening	5 reps	10 min

One starts upright. Then, one moves into the side-lying position, with the head angled upward about half way. An easy way to remember this is to imagine someone standing in front of you, and just keep looking at their head at all times. Stay in the side-lying position for 30 seconds, or until the dizziness subsides if this is longer, then go back to the sitting position. Stay there for 30 seconds, and then go to the opposite side in the same way.

If, during a session, the exercise fails to produce symptoms, stop the exercises for that day. If no symptoms can be produced during the first session of the next day, then stop the exercises entirely. In most persons, complete relief from symptoms is obtained by one week. The Brandt-Daroff exercises as well as the Semont and Epley maneuvers are compared in an article by Brandt (1994), listed in the reference section.

# SURGICAL TREATMENT OF BPPV

## (Posterior Canal Plugging)

If exercises are ineffective in controlling symptoms and they have persisted for a year or longer, a surgical procedure called "canal plugging" may be recommended. Canal plugging completely stops the posterior canal's function without affecting the functions of the other canals or parts of the ear. This procedure poses a small risk to hearing.