



# **Dizziness & How Chiropractic can help!**

*Some facts ...*

1. Dizziness is one of the most common health problems experienced by adults, especially after head/neck trauma
2. Dizziness rarely indicates a serious or life-threatening condition, even though it can be very disabling.
3. The word “dizziness” is often used to describe symptoms ranging from a sense that the patient or the room is spinning or moving (vertigo), to a loss of balance, unsteadiness, giddiness, light-headedness, or weakness.
4. People may also experience nausea, fatigue, blurred vision and difficulty concentrating. Symptoms may be constant, or may come in episodes lasting from minutes to days

## Balance

Our sense of balance is controlled by signals to the brain from three sensory systems:

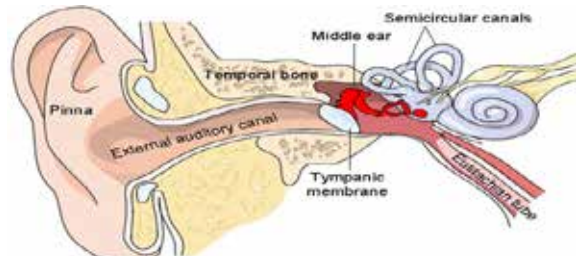
- Eyes
- Movement sensors in the skin, muscles and joints
- Inner ears (vestibular system): The organs of balance in the inner ear is called the vestibular system. It includes three fluid-filled loops (semicircular canals) which respond to the rotation of the head. Near the semicircular canals are the *utricle* and *sacculle* which detect gravity and back-and-forth motion.

Good balance depends on at least two of these three sensory systems working well. If one system is not working, signals from the other two sensory inputs help keep you balanced. However, if the brain can't process signals from all of these systems, or if the messages are contradictory or not functioning properly, you may experience loss of balance.

*A common cause of Dizziness -*

## Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo

- One of the most common causes of vertigo and dizziness is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV)
- Generally about 20% of all cases of dizziness are due to BPPV and about 50% of all dizziness in older patients is due to Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo



### *What is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo?*

- BPPV involves intense, brief episodes of dizziness associated with moving the head, often on turning over in bed or sitting up in the morning.
- It occurs when particles break loose and fall into the wrong part of the semicircular canals in the inner ear. This gives a false sensation of spinning (vertigo).

### *What are the symptoms of Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo?*

Dizziness - this begins seconds after a certain head movement and lasts less than a minute.

- Feeling light-headed.
- Balance problems
- Nausea - feeling like you are going to vomit

These symptoms usually get better once you are in a different position.

Ringing in the ears (tinnitus) or deafness is not common.

- The cause of BPPV is not known, but it may be a natural result of aging.
- There is an association with minor head injury or repeatedly changing head position, for example working with a computer and constantly looking up and down at the monitor

### *How do we diagnose Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo?*

Chiropractors are able to diagnose this condition after taking a full case history and performing a full physical and neurological examination.

Specific tests, such as the Dix-Hallpike manoeuvre / test, are used to differentiate from other forms of vertigo

## How can Chiropractic help?

- In particular, chiropractic adjustments, especially to the neck, help restore normal sensory flow to the parts of the brain which control your sense of balance and orientation;
- By releasing irritated areas of the spine and restoring joint motion, proprioception (balance) is improved. People experience improvements in maintaining posture and controlling head and eye movements;
- Head exercises - called the Epley's Manoeuvre, these exercises will move the particles out of the semicircular canals of your inner ear to a place where they will not cause vertigo
- Irritation or injury to the joints, muscles or ligaments of the spine, particularly the neck can cause altered sensory supply to the brainstem and aggravate the vertigo condition. Chiropractors can use muscle work, such as trigger point release and stretching; adjustments to release joint restrictions and exercise prescriptions to correct balance in the biomechanics of the spine. This will enable complete and rapid recovery of the damaged tissues.

Health *plus* Chiropractic is a team of health care professionals committed to the highest quality of care and service by being consistently enthusiastic, efficient, loving and dedicated to health care. We will treat and educate those who strive for optimum health and wellbeing, and in return be rewarded by seeing satisfied patients, reaching our full successful potential and bringing joy and fulfillment to us all.

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