

# GET FIT & GET HEALTHY

## Is your head spinning? BPPV may be causing your vertigo



Vertigo is one of the most common reasons for visits to family doctors and emergency rooms. There are many causes of dizziness, but vertigo is defined as a "spinning sensation". People will describe objects around them to be spinning, or feel that they themselves are spinning.

One of the most likely causes of vertigo is BPPV. Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo is caused by calcium carbonate crystals that are normally housed on top of hair cells in a sac in the inner ear. These become loose and fall into one of the semi circular canals. They then stimulate receptors inappropriately causing our brains to sense spinning. This is common in the aging population as the hair cells in the inner ear dry out and allow the crystals to fall off. It also frequently happens with head injuries, ear infections and sometimes for no reason at all!

As well as experiencing a "spinning sensation" with certain movements of the head, people with BPPV may also sense a loss of balance, nausea, decreased concentration and fatigue.

BPPV is a very treatable disorder. The treatment should be done by a

registered physiotherapist with experience in Vestibular Rehabilitation. There are other more serious problems that can cause dizziness and vertigo, so it is important that a full and thorough assessment be done prior to treatment.

Treatment for BPPV involves a series of gentle positional changes of the head that in turn facilitate movement of the crystals through the canal and back into the sac where they belong. These maneuvers are very effective and if done properly should eliminate the vertigo immediately.

If assessed and treated properly,

you should only need two to three visits to the therapist before you are as good as new.

If you are unsure of your symptoms, have numbness, tingling, slurred speech or difficulty swallowing you should always see a doctor first.

*Article submitted by Jenni Veneruz, In Focus Vestibular Rehabilitation, 905-702-7891, www.dizzyhelper.com*

*Jenni Veneruz is a Registered Physiotherapist with advanced training in Vestibular Rehab. She has seen over 200 patients in the GTA with vestibular problems. She also guest lectures at the University of Toronto.*

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*Chantal Garneau is a Reiki Master and Intuitive Counselor whose goal is to connect people with their innate intuition, wisdom and healing abilities.*

**Chantal Garneau's Studio**  
66 Main Street South  
Downtown Georgetown  
905.783.8853  
[info@chantalgarneau.com](mailto:info@chantalgarneau.com)  
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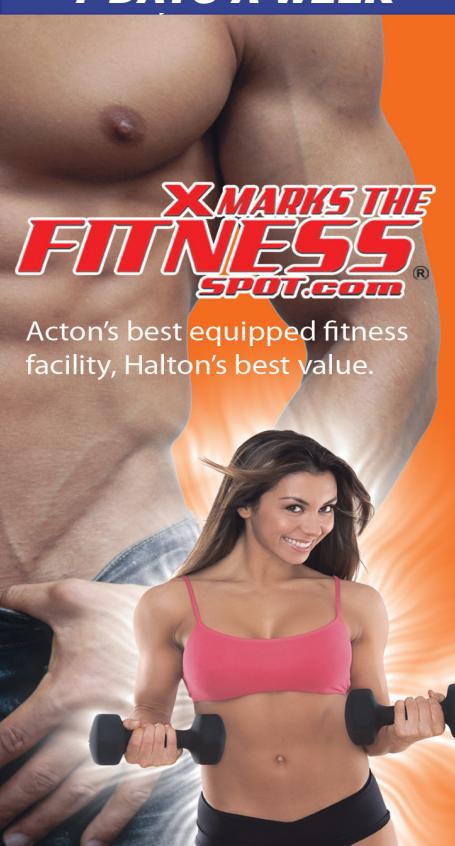
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