

### *A physiotherapy cure for most patients in a single treatment*

BPPV (Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo) is one of the most common causes of dizziness, affecting up to 50 per cent of patients over the age of 70. The biomechanical condition is caused by the dislodgement of calcium carbonate crystals into a region of the inner ear with sensory organs, triggering vertigo. Physiotherapy can be remarkably effective in treating BPPV, and assessments are available in our physiotherapy practice.

#### **Assessment**

Physiotherapists perform non-invasive tests such as the Hallpike to confirm a BPPV diagnosis and determine which ear is affected. The type of nystagmus (involuntary eye movements) observed will also identify which canal is involved.

#### **Treatment**

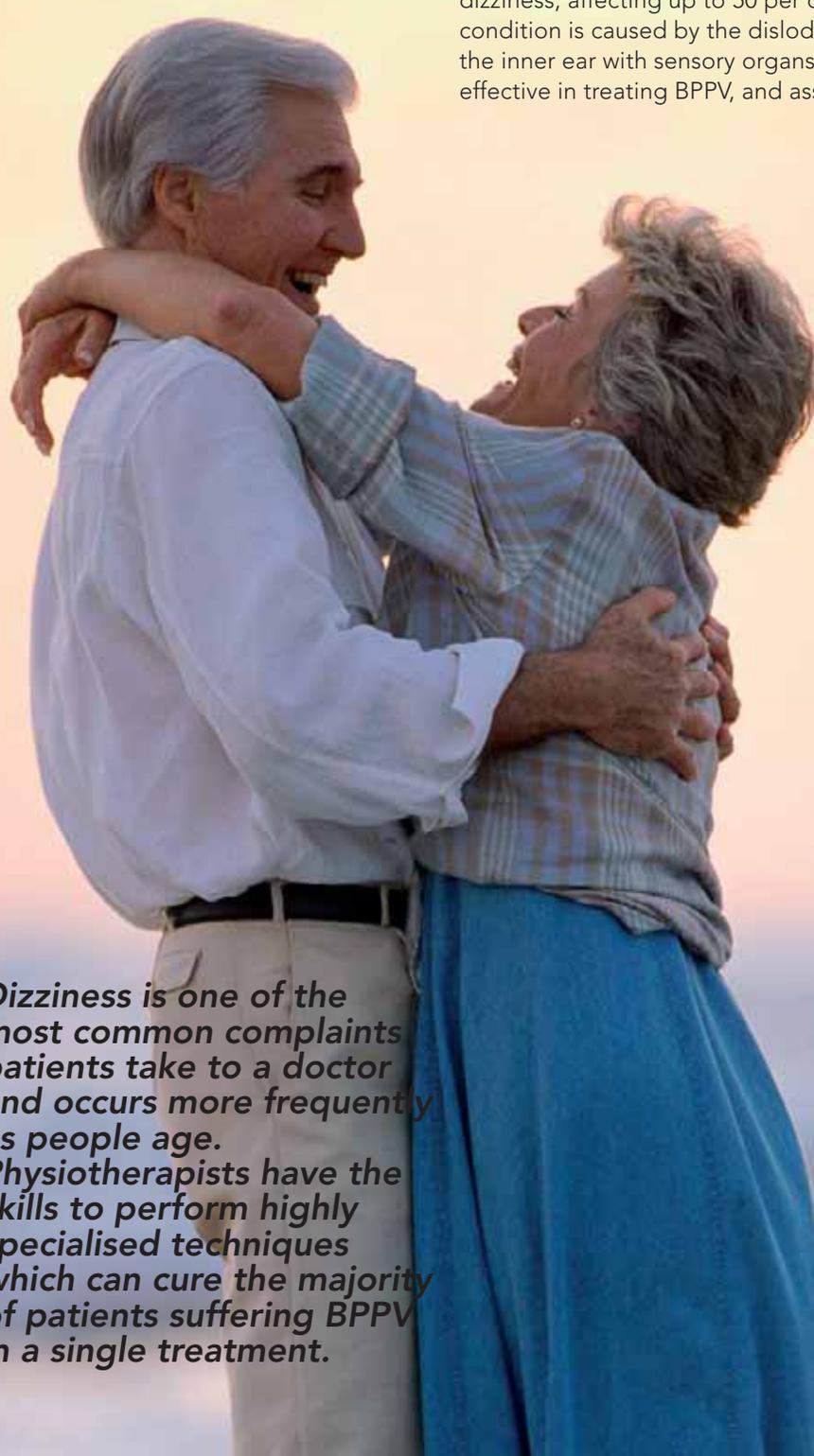
The dizziness resulting from BPPV can be dramatically relieved by specialised techniques performed by skilled physiotherapists that use the forces of gravity to reposition the displaced calcium carbonate crystals to where they no longer disturb the sensory areas of the particular canals of the balance organs.

Standard physiotherapy treatment uses a repositioning manoeuvre – the Epley or Canalith – to move the crystals out of the semi-circular canal. The Semont or Liberatory Manoeuvres are performed for a particular type of BPPV.

Once the primary cause is addressed, physiotherapy treatment can involve a targeted exercise program to reduce a patient's vertiginous response to certain positional changes such as bending forward or looking up. Targeted balance training may be offered to patients with any residual balance deficits. Brandt Daroff exercises are frequently prescribed for patient self-management.

Other inner ear disorders for which vestibular rehabilitation can offer improved outcomes include: vestibular neuronitis / labyrinthitis; acoustic neuroma (post-op); oto-toxicity; movement-induced dizziness; and Ménière's disease.

Vestibular rehabilitation can help address vestibular system disorders and restore the best use of the remaining vestibular function by teaching unaffected balance mechanisms to take over the function or teaching other parts of the body to compensate. Let our highly skilled professionals be part of the treatment plan for your BPPV patients.



***Dizziness is one of the most common complaints patients take to a doctor and occurs more frequently as people age. Physiotherapists have the skills to perform highly specialised techniques which can cure the majority of patients suffering BPPV in a single treatment.***

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## Chinatown Physiotherapy Centre



### **Exercise, strength and balance training to prevent injurious falls**

Evidence-based research findings reinforce the role of physiotherapy-prescribed exercise in reducing falls and injuries for older people living at home. The physiotherapists in our practice are highly skilled in prescribing home-based programs of strength and balance retraining exercises, which will continue to prove effective with patients who maintain their exercise routine.

Studies confirm that an exercise and strengthening program delivers greater benefit when it tailored for an individual and where a physiotherapist provides supervision and monitoring. A program designed to suit the capabilities and lifestyle of an individual is also a factor in compliance from patients to continue the regimen, which is important for sustaining exercise benefits over time.

Physiotherapy research has also identified that balance begins to decline in women over the age of 40 due to changes in sensation and vision, and that exercise programs designed by physiotherapists incorporating vision and head movements can help improve balance in people under 60, to reduce the likelihood of future falls.

Our patient assessment looks for impairments in strength, joint motion and coordination (motor system); and, impairments in proprioception, vision and vestibular function (sensory system). We also measure muscle strength, gait function, and balance through sensory integration and postural stability.

Clinical reasoning is applied to ensure that exercises are optimal for your at-risk patients. Our physiotherapists will customise a program to improve muscle mass and strength, bone density, cardiovascular fitness, and cognitive function.

There is growing evidence that home hazard assessments and modification programs also reduce falls – particularly when undertaken by a trained health professional, and when combined with strategies to modify risky behaviour and maximise compliance with recommended hazard modifications.

The physiotherapists in our practice can advise your patients about the multiple approaches and interventions that will help reduce their risk of falling and causing injury.

**Evidence shows that falls and injury rates in older people can be reduced by a program of strength and balance retraining exercises prescribed by physiotherapists.**

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#### References

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