**Prepared by:** Matt Weston on Jan 08, 2016
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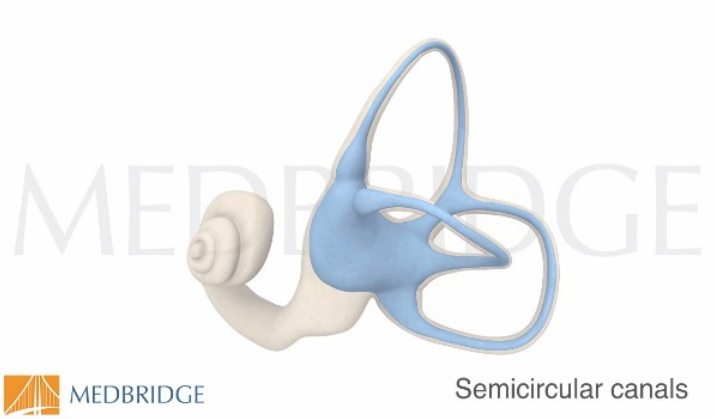
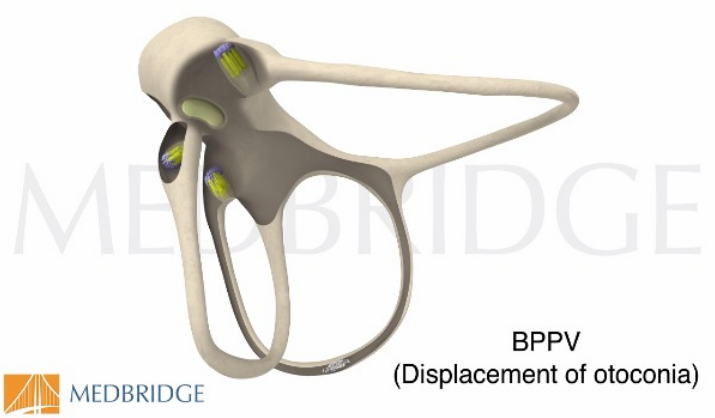
UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONDITION:

# BPPV




Inner Ear: Semicircular Canal




Otoconia Displaced within Semicircular Canal

The vestibular system in the body helps you balance and know where your head is positioned. Vertigo creates a sensation of spinning, and can make being upright or moving your head miserable. BPPV (benign paroxysmal positional vertigo) is a condition that develops from changes in the ear, where the parts of the vestibular system are found.

The ear is responsible for both hearing and balance. The ear is made up of outer, middle, and inner portions, and each section has a specific job. The inner ear is made up of both cochlea (in charge of hearing) and vestibular organs. The vestibular organs sense head position and movement with the help of tiny hair cells that move when you change your head position. This information is used to adjust your eye movements and posture.

Each vestibular organ contains the utricle, saccule, and three semicircular canals. The canals are filled with a fluid that provides information to your brain about rotating head movements. Some people get tiny crystals of calcium carbonate in this fluid. If that happens, the brain is sent signals that you are moving even if your body is still.

People who have experienced a head injury are more likely to develop BPPV. Having a virus, being older than age 50, or being inactive for a long time can also cause BPPV. Therapists are trained in ways to improve your vertigo through certain head movements and exercises that you can do at home.