

Positional vertigo

It's a feeling of dizziness that happens when you turn your head. It's as if the things around you or your own body are spinning. It is caused by the movement of tiny particles in the inner ear. These particles move through the ear's channels when the head moves. It may also make you feel sick. It happens again for a few seconds each time you turn your head.

Most causes of vertigo are not serious and can be easily fixed by moving your head in certain ways.

What should you do if you have vertigo?

Rest in a comfortable position and avoid sudden head movements.

When should you seek medical attention?

Consult your primary care team or go to the emergency room **if this is the first time** it has happened or if you have never sought medical attention for previous episodes. Also consult a doctor **if this episode is different from previous ones**, if it is accompanied by hearing loss or ringing in the ears (tinnitus), or any other neurological symptoms, such as double vision, loss of strength or sensation in the arms or legs, if you are unable to walk or stand, or if the vertigo does not disappear within a couple of minutes after each movement.

Diagnosis of positional vertigo

To confirm the diagnosis, the doctor will ask you to lie down on the examination table (or on your bed if you are at home) with your head turned to one side, while observing whether your eyes move (nystagmus), and you will have to tell them if you feel vertigo.

You may feel discomfort, nausea, or even vomiting. The doctor will then do the same on the other side to find out which ear is affected (in some cases, both are affected).

Diagnostic tests

In most cases, the diagnosis is made through a clinical examination. **No tests are needed** to diagnose vertigo, neither CT scans nor MRIs. Tests may only be recommended in complicated cases. Very rarely, vertigo can be a symptom of a serious illness.

Treatment of vertigo

Positional vertigo can be resolved in the doctor's office.

Your doctor will show you some head and body movements that only take about 3 minutes. Improvement occurs within 24-48 hours. Sometimes you have to do them two or three times. **Trust your doctor. These maneuvers are completely safe and are based on international scientific evidence.**

No medication is needed for positional vertigo. The medications available for vertigo are vestibular sedatives that reduce symptoms but can prolong vertigo, cause memory loss, agitation, or falls, and may reduce the effectiveness of treatment maneuvers.

