

an easy aid to mitigate vertigo

I am Professor & Head of the Department of Physiology of a medical college in Dehradun. A few years back, my second daughter was born and it was a difficult pregnancy experience since I had to undergo premature labour due to my problem of 'pregnancy induced hypertension'. While I was recovering from my problem, I attended an evening outdoor party. Perhaps the cold evening was a little too cold for my feeble body so later I had an attack of labyrinthitis induced vertigo. The feeling was awful, my surroundings were whirling and I was badly diplopic. Even a slight lift from my bed made me feel nauseating and I had constant bout of vomitings.

My husband is an Ophthalmologist, he really comforted me and told that diplopia is temporary and is soon going to regress.



Immediately, I was given medication – cinnarizine. However, I continued to feel

very sick and unwell. I was lying down and went into slumber. Suddenly, I imagined or dreamt of a wall clock with its both arms at 12 o'clock, I wondered! as suddenly the nauseating feeling disappeared.

Thus, whenever problem recurs, I use this method of visualization and focus on this image of clock with both arms at 12 o'clock to alleviate these symptoms. Although I have not researched effect of this manoeuvre on the patients suffering from vertigo, however, I have helped many of my acquaintances using this method and it has worked really well.

Background of Vertigo and how the maneuver helps

Vertigo is described as a illusory rotary sensation of the patient or surroundings occurring with particular changes in body position, mild to moderate imbalance, diplopia, nausea, vomiting, hearing loss and tinnitus. Almost everyone of us has experienced vertigo as the transient spinning giddiness right away after rotating around speedily several times.

It occurs on the presence of **asymmetry** in the vestibular system due to dysfunction of the labyrinth (vestibular apparatus), vestibular nerve, or central vestibular structures in the brainstem. Labyrinth is a complex sense organ of equilibrium or balance present in the inner ear, having components as semicircular canals for updating the information about head rotation-movement and otolith organ for change in head position and thus helps in particularly balancing the head during body movements by its higher up connection specifically to cerebellum. It also controls eye movement inspite of changes in head position (vestibulo-ocular reflex).

Unilateral dysfunction of labyrinth causes oblique involuntary deviation of eyes (nystagmus), rotation and lateral flexion of the head on movement. Nystagmus results in diplopia and nausea.

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