



# DIZZY CLINICS

## AUSTRALIA

### PPPD

#### Persistent Postural Perceptual Dizziness

PPPD is a common cause of chronic dizziness, that is not explained by damage or dysfunction of the vestibular system (inner ear balance centre). People continue to experience persistent dizziness despite their vestibular system functioning well. Sometimes we see these symptoms reduce when the person is distracted. Often PPPD is triggered by an acute vestibular episode, such as BPPV, vestibular neuritis, vestibular migraines, head trauma, anxiety, and other events.

#### Reasons PPPD may develop

During an acute vertigo event, the brain's normal reaction is to depend more on our visual and somatosensory system. This causes the body to be hyper-aware of our balance sensations and adopt more protective strategies. Instead of reverting back to normal balance processing after this event, a maladaptive cycle can develop, which causes PPPD symptoms. Simply, a person with PPPD does not switch out of 'crisis' mode and remains on 'red alert'.

The brain becomes hyper-vigilant and sensitive to differences between anticipated and actual motion.

#### Diagnosis

- dizziness, unsteadiness, or non-spinning vertigo
  - present on most days for >3months
- persistent symptoms occur without specific provocations, worsened by...
  - upright posture | head/body motion | moving/complex visual stimuli
- usually precipitated by conditions that cause acute vestibular symptoms
- symptoms cause distress and functional impairment
- symptoms are not accounted by anything else

#### Treatment

The aim is to readapt the brain/vestibular system back to normal function and promote automatic movement control

- vestibular and balance rehabilitation therapy
- psychological therapy
- medical management