How common is Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV) encountered in General Outpatient Clinics?
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Introduction
It is stated in the literature that between 17 and 42 percent of patients with vertigo were having BPPV, but all these research data were collected in specialist dizziness clinics, and the true prevalence of BPPV in primary care setting is largely unknown.

Objectives
To estimate the prevalence of BPPV among patients consulting General Outpatient Clinics with a chief complaint of dizziness.

Methodology
All patients attending Ma On Shan Family Medicine Centre with an ICPC-2 coding of H82 (Vertiginous syndrome) or N17 (Vertigo/Dizziness) managed by the author from 4 Jan 10 to 3 Jan 11 were included for analysis. Patients referred by other medical officers to the author for management of BPPV were excluded to avoid distorting the data.

Result
A total of 143 patients complaining of dizziness were encountered by the author in this 1 year period. 98 patients (68.5%) were diagnosed having dizziness not related to BPPV, such as vestibular neuronitis (n=24, 16.8%). 45 patients (31.5%) were clinically diagnosed to have BPPV, including 22 cases of "objective BPPV" as confirmed by Dix hallpike test or supine roll test, and 7 cases of "subjective BPPV" in which positional testing reproduced the vertigo symptom but no nystagmus was observed. 16 patients reported typical symptoms of BPPV, but positional testing was negative. These patients were thought to have BPPV which had spontaneously subsided shortly before the consultation. Among the 22 cases of "objective BPPV" (48.9%) of all BPPV
cases), 20 cases (90.9%) were successfully treated with either Epley manoeuvre, Barbeque roll manoeuvre or Semont liberatory manoeuvre. Discussions 1) 31.5% of patients presented to the author with dizziness in a one year period were actually having BPPV. 2) 48.9% of BPPV cases were having "objective BPPV" and the cure rate with one of the office manoeuvres could be as high as 90.9%. 