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## Boston-Area Vestibular Disorders Support Group Visits an Omniax

On February 27th, 2010, the Boston-Area Vestibular Disorders Support Group, facilitated by Claire Haddad, CFA, attended a special meeting at the medical office and vestibular testing lab of Arrigg Eye & Ear Associates in Lawrence, MA. Fred G. Arrigg Jr., MD, along with audiologist Christine Donigian Tisbert, MS, CCC-A, and physical therapist Susan Slysz, PT, CVT, gave a tour of their vestibular testing equipment, including the Epley Omniax System (the “Omniax”). Designed to accurately diagnose and effectively treat benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), the Omniax is a very recently developed technology; currently, there are only eleven in the world.

During the tour, Paul Albert, PT, a support group leader from Portland, ME, graciously volunteered to sit in the Omniax chair while staff members demonstrated its 360° movement capability. The staff members explained how the Omniax can reposition otoconia in a patient’s semicircular canals at angles that can be difficult with traditional repositioning procedures. Because the Omniax is so new, there are no clinical studies supporting its effectiveness. However, Dr. Arrigg is very pleased with

the early results, stating that “the Omniax is another important tool in diagnosing and treating BPPV.”

This special demonstration came about after Boston support group member Maureen L. shared her positive Omniax experience at a meeting. Maureen was diagnosed with viral labyrinthitis in May 2007, but after two years, her symptoms had not improved. Feeling frustrated, she contacted the support group in June 2009. After attending a couple of meetings, she was convinced that she needed a second opinion, and sought one from Dr. Arrigg.

Although she had been treated with Epley maneuvers by several physicians and physical therapists to rule out BPPV, Dr. Arrigg suspected that Maureen might indeed have the disorder. Maureen was treated with the Omniax and felt dramatically better the next day. “I feel so well that I went snow tubing with my grandchildren. More importantly, daily activities, such as driving, have become easier. When I turn my head from side to side to look for oncoming cars, I don’t get dizzy or blurred vision anymore,” she explains. Although Maureen knows that BPPV can recur, she is comforted that the Omniax is nearby for future treatment.

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Boston-area Vestibular Disorders Support Group receives tour and demonstration of vestibular testing equipment at the medical office and vestibular testing lab of Arrigg Eye & Ear Associates in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

