

MUSIC AS ADD-ON THERAPY IN THE REHABILITATION PROGRAM OF PARKINSON DISEASE PATIENTS

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Abstract

Music has been proven to have beneficial effect with a therapeutic potential in neurological disorders, especially Parkinson’s disease (PD), since it releases dopamine and serotonin – neurotransmitters that decline in Parkinson’s patients and rhythmic auditory cueing can activate alternative non-dopaminergic cerebral circuits. Several data from literature have highlighted improvements in gait and motor outcomes in PD patients through music therapy, but only a few studies have evaluated non-motor outcomes, such as quality of life (QoL), which deteriorates progressively to that patients. The current pilot study aims to examine the effects of a rehabilitation program centered on physical therapy combined with listening to music on QoL in people with PD, compared to the same rehabilitation program alone. The study was conducted on two groups of PD patients who attended a specific rehabilitation program with a duration of 2.5 h daily for 14 days. The study group (16 patients) listened to background music during the rehabilitation program sessions, and the control group (16 patients) did not listen to music during sessions. The patients were assessed using the self-report Parkinson’s Disease Questionnaire (PDQ-39) at the beginning of the program and 1 month after its initiation. The study group registered greater improvements in five of the eight areas of life assessed by PDQ-39 compared to the control group. In conclusion, listening to music combined with physical therapy may positively impact the PD patients’ quality of life.

Keywords: *Parkinson’s disease; music therapy; neurorehabilitation; quality of life*