MUSIC THERAPY AS AN ADJUVANT TO REDUCE PERIOPERATIVE PAIN

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Abstract

Purpose: Health care institutions aim to place comfort in the forefront of patient care. Health care professionals continue to seek adjuvants and alternatives to pain management methods for their patients, and music therapy is emerging as a pioneer, non-pharmacological means of pain control. The purpose of this systematic review is to investigate if music therapy (MT) is an effective adjuvant in treating postoperative pain.

Methodology: Two doctoral nurse anesthesia students collectively performed an exhaustive search of current literature on the PICO topic. CINAHL, ProQuest, TRIP, Medline, Ovid, the Cochrane Collection, and Google Scholar were searched using specific search terms and Boolean phrases. A total of 707 research articles were found, and 691 articles were rejected due to irrelevancy to the PICO. Sixteen full-text articles were critiqued for validity. Two articles were eliminated due to insufficient data and immaterial outcome measures, and nine articles were eliminated due to redundancy. A total of five articles met the criteria for inclusion into the systematic review.

Results: Three randomized controlled trials that delivered MT perioperatively to the intervention groups concluded that MT significantly reduced perioperative pain. Another study that administered intraoperative MT found no difference in perioperative pain scores between the intervention group and control group. A meta-analysis evaluated 55 studies and concluded that perioperative MT significantly reduces postoperative opiate requirements after procedures requiring general anesthesia, locoregional anesthesia, and/or moderate sedation.

Implications for Practice and Research: The studies show promise that MT can be a valuable adjuvant in the anesthetic management of adult surgical patients. MT may also aid in the decrease of opioid analgesic consumption. Future studies should carefully consider other (non-opioid) postoperative analgesics as outcome parameters. Additionally, conducting more double-blinded studies could contribute stronger evidence to the topic.