

## Music Therapy and Dementia - Recent Research

### ***Individual music therapy for agitation in dementia: an exploratory randomized controlled trial, 2013***

- Crossover trial, 42 participants.
- Randomized to sequence of 6 weeks of individual music therapy vs standard care
- Outcome measures included agitation, quality of life and medication.

Results: Agitation disruptiveness increased during standard care and decreased during music therapy. The difference at -6.77 (95% confidence interval) was significant ( $p=0.027$ ), with a medium effect size (0.50). Prescription of psychotropic medication increased significantly more often during standard care than during music therapy ( $p=0.02$ ).

Conclusion: This study shows that ***six weeks of music therapy reduces agitation disruptiveness and prevents medication increases in people with dementia.*** The positive trends in relation to agitation frequency and quality of life call for further research with a larger sample.

Ridder et al., Aging & Mental Health Journal  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23621805>

### ***The Impact of Group Music Therapy on Depression and Cognition in Elderly Persons With Dementia: A Randomized Controlled Study, 2014***

- Parallel-group design, 104 participants.
- Randomly assigned to 12 sessions of group music therapy vs usual care.
- Data collected before, during and after course of music therapy.

Results: Group music therapy reduced depression in persons with dementia. Improvements in depression occurred immediately after music therapy and were apparent throughout the course of therapy. The cortisol level did not significantly decrease after the group music therapy. Cognitive function significantly improved slightly; in particular, short-term recall function improved. The group music therapy intervention had the greatest impact in subjects with mild and moderate dementia.

Conclusion: ***The group music intervention is a noninvasive and inexpensive therapy that appeared to reduce elders' depression. It also delayed the deterioration of cognitive functions, particularly short-term recall function.*** Group music therapy may be an appropriate intervention among elderly persons with mild and moderate dementia.

Chu et al., Biological Research for Nursing  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23639952>