

NEWS

Music Therapy Facilitates Recovery in the Postacute Rehabilitation Program for Stroke Patients

According to the WHO, 15 million people suffer from stroke every year. Once in every 6 s, someone somewhere dies from a stroke. Stroke is the second most common cause of death for people over the age of 60 years. Stroke is also the principal cause of long-term disability irrespective of age, gender, and ethnicity.^[1] The most important goal in rehabilitating a stroke patient is to get them back in control of the skills so that they could do their day-to-day activities and simple leisure activities without depending on the help of others. Music has been used to influence a patient's physical, mental, or emotional health during or after medical treatment.^[2] Listening to music causes the widespread activation of temporal, prefrontal, premotor, and parietal cortical areas. Most of the cognitive functions can also be stimulated using music therapy. Music also influences the emotions of an individual.^[2] Both receptive and active approaches to music therapy are used in the rehabilitation of stroke patients. Music-supported therapy has shown marked improvements in motor skills in poststroke patients.^[3] Music

therapy not only improves the motor and cognitive functions but also psychological outcomes in a poststroke patient.^[3] Music therapy is also effective in traumatic brain injury. Listening to music brings about relaxation and improves one's mood and provides a better physical and mental activation during the early stages of recovery from stroke. Hence, music therapy plays a supportive role in the rehabilitation of poststroke patients.

REFERENCES

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VIEWS

Physical Activity May Lower the Risk of Breast and Bowel Cancer

According to a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013 published in August 9, 2016 in the BMJ, people who achieve a higher total physical activity levels than the current recommended minimum level significantly have a lower risk of breast cancer, bowel cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. This is the first meta-analysis, which has quantified dose-response association between total physical activity across all domains and the risk of five chronic diseases. Compared with individuals with total activity <600 metabolic equivalent (MET) minutes/week, the risk reduction for those in the highly active category (≥ 8000 MET minutes/week) was 14% for breast cancer, 21% for colon cancer, 28% for diabetes,

25% for ischemic heart disease, and 26% for ischemic stroke. These results suggest that total physical activity needs to be several times higher than the recommended minimum level of 600 MET minutes/week for larger reductions in the risk of these diseases. The WHO recommends at least 600 MET minutes of total activity (irrespective of domains) per week for health benefits, i.e., about 150 min/week of brisk walking or 75 min/week of running. This high level of total activity can be achieved by combining different types of physical activity into the daily routine. Focusing on a particular domain such as leisure time physical activity, which represents only a small fraction of total activity, as was done by most studies, restricts the scope of applicability of the findings.

Environmental Pollution Promotes Childhood Obesity and Diabetes

Environment plays an important role in the pathogenesis of many diseases. Children <5 years of age and adults older than 50 years are at increased risk. According to the WHO report, 23% of global deaths and 26% of deaths among children under the age of 5 years are due to modifiable environmental factors. The harmful effects of environmental pollution on lung functions are well known and well established. Environmental pollution has been linked to many noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, obesity, cancers, and type 2 diabetes. Studies have underscored the dire need for a healthier environment. A study reported in the January 2017 issue of the journal Diabetes investigated whether exposure

to elevated concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM 2.5) had adverse effects on longitudinal measures of insulin sensitivity, β-cell function, and obesity in children at high risk for developing diabetes and concluded that environmental pollution plays an important role in the development of type 2 diabetes through its direct effect on β-cell function and insulin sensitivity.

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