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The Effects of Music Therapy on the Aggressive Behaviors of Long-term Care Residents with Alzheimer's Disease

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Objectives

Alzheimer's disease is a type of dementia which causes the brain to slowly degenerate leading to memory loss and the reduced ability to perform activities of daily living. The disease can also cause individuals to become combative, aggressive, and to suffer personality changes. This literature review examines the effects of music therapy on the combative behaviors of long-term care residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Methods

A review of the literature was conducted using PubMed, Google Scholar, and the National Library of Medicine. Peer reviewed articles were limited to full text articles written within the past five years. Abstracts were reviewed for the higher levels of evidence. In this literature review, four articles were reviewed including two meta-analysis studies and two randomized control trials. The articles were found using Boolean search strategies and the key words: dementia, Alzheimer's, music therapy, long term care, and aggressive behaviors.

Key Words

- Dementia, Alzheimer's
- Music Therapy
- Long Term Care
- Aggressive Behaviors

Abstract

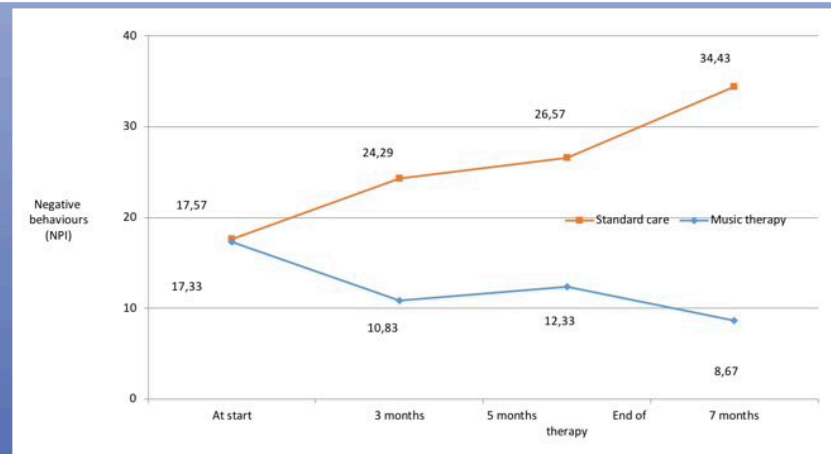
Objectives: Alzheimer's disease is a type of dementia which causes the brain to slowly degenerate leading to memory loss and the reduced ability to perform activities of daily living. The disease can also cause individuals to become combative, aggressive, and to suffer personality changes. This literature review examines the effects of music therapy on the combative behaviors of long-term care residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. **Methods:** A review of the literature was conducted using PubMed, Google Scholar, and the National Library of Medicine. Peer reviewed articles were limited to full text articles written within the past five years. Abstracts were reviewed for the higher levels of evidence. In this literature review, four articles were reviewed including two meta-analysis studies and two randomized control trials. The articles were found using Boolean search strategies and the key words: dementia, Alzheimer's, music therapy, long term care, and aggressive behaviors. **Results:** All four articles found music therapy to be effective in reducing aggressive behaviors and reducing cognitive distress in long term care residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's and dementia. **Discussion:** The studies show that both making music and listening to music are effective forms of therapy in treating the aggressive behaviors of Alzheimer's and dementia. The interventions showed positive effects in improving aggression, anxiety, mood, and quality of life. Music therapy is an effective non-pharmacological method in reducing aggression caused by dementia and Alzheimer's.

Results

All four articles found music therapy to be effective in reducing aggressive behaviors and reducing cognitive distress in long term care residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's and dementia. The interventions showed positive effects in improving aggression, anxiety, mood, and quality of life.

Discussion

The studies show that both making music and listening to music are effective forms of therapy in treating the aggressive behaviors of Alzheimer's and dementia. Music therapy is an effective non-pharmacological method in reducing aggression caused by dementia and Alzheimer's.



Mean scores for symptoms of dementia for music therapy and standard care groups, showing a decline in negative behaviors over time for patients receiving music therapy (Odell-Miller, 2021).

References

