

Pleasant music improves visual attention in patients with unilateral neglect after stroke.

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Objective: To investigate whether listening to pleasant music improves visual attention to and awareness of contralesional stimuli in patients with unilateral neglect after stroke. **Methods:** A within-subject design was used with 19 participants with unilateral neglect following a right hemisphere stroke. Participants were tested in three conditions (pleasant music, unpleasant music and white noise) within 1 week. All musical pieces were chosen by the participants. In each condition, participants were asked to complete three sub-tests of the Behavioural Inattention Test (the Star Cancellation Test, the Line Bisection Test and the Picture Scanning test) and a visual exploration task with everyday scenes. Eye movements in the visual exploration task were recorded simultaneously. Mood and arousal induced by different auditory stimuli were assessed using visual analogue scales, heart rate and galvanic skin response. **Results:** Compared with unpleasant music and white noise, participants rated their moods as more positive and arousal as higher with pleasant music, but also showed significant improvement on all tasks and eye movement data, except the Line Bisection Test. **Conclusion:** The findings suggest that pleasant music can improve visual attention in patients with unilateral neglect after stroke. Additional research using randomized controlled trials is required to validate these findings.

Brain Inj. 2013;27(1):75-82. doi: 10.3109/02699052.2012.722255. Chen MC, Tsai PL, Huang YT, Lin KC. Department of Occupational Therapy, National Cheng Kung University , Tainan , Taiwan.

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