Can listening to Mozart reduce epileptic seizures?

In a paper published in the journal Clinical Neurophysiology and just presented at a virtual meeting of the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology, [researchers Gianluca Sesso and Federico Sicca] present findings which, they say, “may overturn current scepticism about the effect” [that Mozart and other music can reduce epileptic seizures].

They looked at 147 published articles, evaluated them according to relevance and quality, then selected the 12 pieces they thought represented the best available science on the topic.

They found, they say, that listening to Mozart, especially on a daily basis, led to a significant reduction in epileptic seizures, and also to a reduced frequency of interictal epileptiform discharges – abnormal brain activities commonly seen in epileptic patients.

These effects occurred after a single listening session and were maintained after a prolonged period of treatment.

The meta-analysis indicates that a period of listening to Mozart can give an average reduction in epileptic seizures ranging from between 31% to 66%, but this varies from person to person and according to the music stimulus used.

The researchers say the highly consistent results of their meta-analysis “strongly suggest that music-based neurostimulation may improve the clinical outcome in epilepsy… and, thus, deserves not to be kept out of the set of non-pharmacological complementary approaches for treating epilepsy”.

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