

Music may help relieve medical anxiety

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A U.S. study suggests music might allow colonoscopies to be preformed using less sedation without sacrificing comfort.

Although colonoscopies effectively detect colon cancer at an early stage, patients often fear discomfort and put off their appointment.

Now a study reveals a patient's favorite tunes might be effective in significantly reducing such anxieties.

Temple University researchers asked 44 female and 29 male subjects to select favorite music from home or from a collection of CDs. Before the procedure, ear buds were taped to all of the participants' ears and volume was set to be audible to only the patient.

After the patient received his or her initial dose of medication, an investigator opened a randomized envelope to see if the music selections would be played. Following the colonoscopy, the attending doctor, fellow and nurse evaluated pain, anxiety and comfort levels for each patient. A non-participating medical provider conducted a second, later interview.

Results revealed those who listened to music required less sedation, yet reported the same comfort levels as those receiving the higher amounts.

The results of the double-blind study were presented during this year's meeting of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy.

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