

Excessive ICU noise may harm patients

October 22 2012

New research shows that overnight noise levels in the medical ICU (MICU) often exceed recommended levels, which could potentially lead to worse outcomes.

Researchers from Yale University School of Medicine reviewed 70 MICU patient charts and recorded in-room activities between midnight and 4:00 AM. Based on this chart review and via [direct observation](#), they also identified the key elements of nocturnal patient disruption.

Results showed significant in-room activity (ie, vital sign recording) and sound level maximums that exceeded 83 dB(C) every hour between midnight and 4:00 AM in every room monitored, which exceeds the sound levels recommended by WHO.

Researchers conclude that sleep disruption in the MICU is prevalent and may be linked to delirium and immune dysfunction, as well as potentially worse outcomes due to patient [sleep deprivation](#). This study was presented during CHEST 2012, the annual meeting of the [American College of Chest Physicians](#), held October 20 – 25, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Provided by American College of Chest Physicians

Citation: Excessive ICU noise may harm patients (2012, October 22) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-10-excessive-icu-noise-patients.html>

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