

Keep calm and don your video glasses

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Music may soothe the soul, but it takes video to calm a patient undergoing medical treatment, notes a study in which individuals watched television shows or movies through special video glasses while having a biopsy or other minimally invasive treatment. The research is being presented at the Society of Interventional Radiology's 39th Annual Scientific Meeting.

Although interventional radiology treatments offer less risk, less pain and less recovery time compared to open surgery, [patients](#) nonetheless may be anxious about them and their outcomes. Researchers have explored strategies other than medication to reduce anxiety, including having the patient listen to music or undergo hypnosis; however, these methods have modest benefits at best.

"Interventional radiologists are focused on innovation and creativity by applying novel devices to variable situations. Our study—the first of its kind for interventional radiology treatments—puts a spin on using modern technology to provide a safe, potentially cost-effective strategy of reducing anxiety, which can help and improve patient care," said David L. Waldman, M.D., Ph.D., FSIR, lead author of the study and professor and chair of the department of imaging sciences at the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, N.Y. "Whether they were watching a children's movie or a nature show, patients wearing video glasses were successful at tuning out their surroundings," he noted. "It's an effective distraction technique that helps focus the individual's attention away from the [treatment](#)," Waldman added.

The study involved 49 patients (33 men and 16 women, ages 18-87) who were undergoing an outpatient [interventional radiology](#) treatment, such as a biopsy or placement of a catheter in the arm or chest to receive medication for treating cancer or infection. Twenty-five of the patients donned video glasses prior to undergoing the treatment and 24 did not. Patients chose from among 20 videos, none of which were violent. All filled out a standard 20-question test called the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory Form Y before and after the procedure to assess their level of anxiety. Patients who wore video glasses were 18.1 percent less anxious after the treatment than they were before, while those who didn't wear video glasses were only 7.5 percent less anxious afterward. The presence of the video glasses did not bother either the patient or the doctor, said Waldman. There was no significant effect on blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, pain, procedure time, or amount of sedation or pain medication.

"Patients told us the video glasses really helped calm them down and took their mind off the treatment, and we now offer video glasses to help distract patients from [medical treatment](#) going on mere inches away," said Waldman. "It is really comforting for patients, especially the ones who tend to be more nervous," he said.

More information: Abstract 126: "Clinical Efficacy, Safety and Feasibility of Using Video Glasses During Interventional Radiologic Procedures," A. Fang, M.D.; D.L. Waldman, M.D., FSIR, J. Xue, Ph.D.; Imaging Science; S. Ahmed, Imaging Science; S. Ahmed, School of Medicine, all University of Rochester Medical Center, Rochester, N.Y. SIR Annual Scientific Meeting, March 22-27. This abstract can be found at www.SIRmeeting.org

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