

## Headbanging caused brain bleed in Motorhead fan

July 3 2014, by Maria Cheng

---



In this Saturday, Oct. 7, 2006 file photo, rock band Motorhead performs during the show program of the the "TV total Stock Car Crash Challenge 2006" celebrities race at the Veltins-Arena in Gelsenkirchen, western Germany. While its critics often dismiss heavy metal as the music of the devil, it turns out the genre can actually be hazardous to your health. German doctors say they treated a man whose headbanging habit ultimately led to a brain injury, but they say the risk to fans is so small they shouldn't give up their rhythmic ways. Last January,

Dr. Ariyan Pirayesh Islamian at Hannover Medical School saw a 50-year-old man who complained of constant, worsening headaches. The patient, who was not identified, had no history of head injuries or substance abuse problems but said he had been headbanging at a Motorhead concert with his son about one month before. After a computer scan, doctors realized their patient had a brain bleed and needed a hole drilled into his brain to drain the blood. The patient's headaches soon disappeared after the surgery. In a follow-up scan, his doctors saw he previously had a benign cyst which might have made the heavy metal aficionado more vulnerable to a brain injury. "We are not against headbanging," Islamian said. "The risk of injury is very, very low. But I think if (our patient) had (gone) to a classical concert, this would not have happened." Motorhead is an English heavy metal band known for helping create the "speed metal" genre, which inspires extremely fast headbanging. Islamian described the band as "one of the most hard-core rock and roll acts on earth." (AP Photo/Martin Meissner, File)

It may not destroy your soul, but it turns out heavy metal music can be hazardous to your brain. At least in some rare cases.

German doctors say they have treated a Motorhead fan whose headbanging habit ultimately led to a brain injury, but that the risk to metal fans in general is so small they don't need to give up the shaking.

Last January, doctors at Hannover Medical School saw a 50-year-old man who complained of constant, worsening headaches. The patient, who was not identified, had no history of head injuries or substance abuse problems but said he had been headbanging regularly for years—most recently at a Motorhead concert he attended with his son.

After a scan, doctors discovered their patient had a brain bleed and needed a hole drilled into his brain to drain the blood. The patient's headaches soon disappeared. In a follow-up scan, the doctors saw he had

a benign cyst which might have made the metal aficionado more vulnerable to a brain injury.

"We are not against headbanging," said Dr. Ariyan Pirayesh Islamian, one of the doctors who treated the man. "The risk of injury is very, very low. But I think if (our patient) had (gone) to a classical concert, this would not have happened."

Islamian said the violent shaking of the head in headbanging can sometimes be enough to cause damage as the brain bumps up against the skull and noted a handful of previous injuries, also in heavy metal fans. The latest case was described in a report published online Friday in the journal *Lancet*.

Motorhead is a British metal band known for helping create the "speed metal" genre, which inspires extremely fast headbanging. Islamian described the band as "one of the most hard-core rock 'n' roll acts on earth."

Doctors said headbangers shouldn't be discouraged from enjoying their favorite bands.

"There are probably other higher risk events going on at rock concerts than headbanging," noted Dr. Colin Shieff, a neurosurgeon and trustee of the British brain injury advocacy group Headway. "Most people who go to music festivals and jump up and down while shaking their heads don't end up in the hands of a neurosurgeon."

Islamian agreed heavy metal fans shouldn't necessarily skip the headbanging.

"Rock 'n' roll will never die," he said. "Heavy metal fans should rock on."

**More information:** Paper: [www.thelancet.com/journals/lan ...](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lan...)  
 [\(14\)60923-5/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lan...)

© 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Headbanging caused brain bleed in Motorhead fan (2014, July 3) retrieved 29 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-07-doctors-motorhead-reputation-hardcore-rocknroll.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.