Patient-selected audio therapy may ease pediatric post-op pain

January 15 2015

(HealthDay)—Going through a surgery often means postoperative pain for children, but listening to their favorite music might help ease their discomfort, according to a new study published online Jan. 3 in *Pediatric Surgery International*.

The new study was led by Santhanam Suresh, M.D., a professor of anesthesiology and pediatrics at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. It involved 60 children, aged 9 to 14, who were all dealing with postoperative pain as patients at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

The researchers let the young patients choose from a list of pop, country, classical, or rock music and short audio stories. The study used standard, objective measurements of pain to gauge any effect. Giving children the

choice of whatever music or story they wanted to listen to was key, Suresh said. "Everyone relates to music, but people have different preferences," he said in a university news release.

The researchers found that listening to the music or stories for 30 minutes helped distract the children from their pain. "Audio therapy is an exciting opportunity and should be considered by hospitals as an important strategy to minimize pain in children undergoing major surgery," Suresh said. And unlike drug therapy, "this is inexpensive and doesn't have any side effects."

More information: Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)