

Combination of therapeutic touch and music key to a better night's sleep during menopause, says study

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If you're sleep deprived because of transitioning through menopause, there are probably few things you wouldn't try to get a good night's sleep.

A new study, however, suggests better sleep could be as easy to achieve as listening to music and receiving therapeutic touch. Results of a survey are published online in *Menopause*.

Sleep disturbances are, unfortunately, common during [menopause](#), with roughly 40% to 60% of menopausal women complaining of sleep problems. These problems include difficulty getting to sleep or staying asleep. Other common complaints of women going through menopause are hot flashes, night sweats, palpitations, weight gain, fatigue, and irritability.

In recent years, more women have turned to complementary and [alternative medicine](#) (CAM) to help manage these common menopause symptoms, even though there are pharmacologic solutions (hormone and nonhormone) on the market that have proven effective in reducing these types of problems. Common CAM methods include yoga, biofeedback, relaxation techniques, reflexology, acupressure, hypnosis, therapeutic touch, [music](#), [cognitive-behavioral therapy](#), mindfulness-based stress reduction, aromatherapy, and herbal products.

One CAM method growing in popularity in recent years is therapeutic touch, which is a noninvasive nursing intervention that directs life energy to patients and balances it, reportedly increasing the flow of energy, removing blockages, and creating an environment that promotes the acceleration of the natural healing process to alleviate ailments or symptoms caused by imbalances and blockages in life energy fields.

Music, another common CAM method, has been used as a healing tool throughout history. Pleasant music perceived by the right hemisphere of the brain stimulates the release of endorphins from the pituitary gland and lowers the heart rate, catecholamine levels, respiratory rate, and blood pressure. In addition, music diverts the attention of persons from negative stimuli to pleasant vibrations emitted by music. This reduces

the person's pain, anxiety, sadness, and stress and changes the perception of pain.

In a new study involving more than 100 menopausal women, researchers sought to examine the effects of therapeutic touch and music on sleep quality, menopause symptoms, and overall quality of life in perimenopausal and postmenopausal women.

After four weeks of intervention, the researchers confirmed that therapeutic touch and music significantly affected sleep quality (in terms of subjective sleep quality, sleep latency, and sleep disturbances) in women and significantly improved menopause symptoms and menopause-specific quality of life.

Study results are published in the article "The effects of therapeutic touch and music on [sleep quality](#), menopause symptoms, and quality of life in [menopausal women](#)."

"This small study highlights some potential benefit of music and therapeutic touch for menopause symptoms. Although these therapies may be cost effective and safe, additional study in larger numbers of women is needed to confirm their efficacy for menopause symptom management. Further, [hormone therapy](#) remains the most effective treatment for menopause symptoms, and for most women aged younger than 60 years and within 10 years of menopause onset, the benefits outweigh the risks," says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, medical director for The Menopause Society.

More information: Fatma Keskin Töre et al, The effects of therapeutic touch and music on sleep quality, menopausal symptoms, and quality of life in menopausal women, *Menopause* (2023). [DOI: 10.1097/GME.0000000000002269](https://doi.org/10.1097/GME.0000000000002269)

Provided by The North American Menopause Society

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