Randomized Controlled Trial of Neurologic Music Therapy in Parkinson’s Disease: Research Rehabilitation Protocols for Mechanistic and Clinical Investigations

Isabelle Buard (Isabelle.Buard@cuanschutz.edu)
University of Colorado Denver  https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9455-6365

Lucas Lattanzio
University of Colorado Denver - Anschutz Medical Campus: University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus

Rebekah Stewart
Rehabilitative Rhythms

Sarah Thompson
Rehabilitative Rhythms

Kristin Sjoberg
Rehabilitative Rhythms

Karen Hookstadt
University of Colorado Health

Meghan Morrow
University of Colorado Health

Samantha K Holden
University of Colorado Denver - Anschutz Medical Center

Stefan Sillau
University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center: University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus

Michael Thaut
University of Toronto

Benzi Kluger
University of Rochester Department of Neurology

Study protocol

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Abstract

Background

Presently available medications and surgical treatments for Parkinson’s disease have limited effects on fine motor problems and often leave patients with significant fine motor disability. Standard of care occupational therapy (OT) yields low efficacy, potentially due to a lack of standard protocols. Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT) techniques, especially Rhythmic Auditory Stimulation which relies on interaction between rhythm and movement, have shown to be effective in PD gait rehabilitation possibly through their reliance on neural pathways that are not affected by PD. Therapeutic Instrumental Music Performance (TIMP) is one other NMT technique that holds promise but which mode of action and efficacy has not been investigated in PD yet.

Methods

One hundred PD participants will be randomly assigned to receive 15 sessions of either TIMP with rhythm or TIMP without rhythm, standard of care OT, or to be waitlisted (control) over 5 consecutive weeks. Brain oscillatory responses will be collected using magnetoencephalography during an auditory-motor task to understand the underlying mechanisms. The Grooved Pegboard, the UPDRS III finger tap and the finger-thumb opposition will be assessed to investigate clinical changes related to fine motor function. This project will also serve to confirm or refute our pilot data findings suggesting NMT relies on compensatory brain networks utilized by the PD brain to bypass the dysfunctional basal ganglia.

Discussion

This study aims to use standardized TIMP and OT research protocols for investigating the neuronal pathways utilized by each intervention and possibly study their efficacy with respect to fine motor rehabilitation via a randomized control trial in the PD population.

Full Text

Due to technical limitations, full-text HTML conversion of this manuscript could not be completed. However, the manuscript can be downloaded and accessed as a PDF.

Figures
Figure 1

Study Flow