

## Can music ease physical pain? Canadian study suggests so

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TO investigate the potential pain-alleviating effects of music, researchers at McGill University in Montreal conducted a study with 63 healthy volunteers. The participants experienced a burning sensation, akin to touching a scalding coffee cup, on part of their left arm using a heated probe.



During this painful experience, the volunteers listened to one of their favorite songs, a relaxing track chosen by the researchers, scrambled music, or silence for seven-minute sessions.

The results of the study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Pain Research*, indicated that listening to one's favourite music significantly reduced the perception of pain intensity and unpleasantness.

In essence, the participants seemed less sensitive to pain when they were listening to music they loved.

These findings suggest that music could serve as a drug-free method to reduce the perception of pain in individuals. Darius Valevicius, the first author of the research, noted that favourite music was comparable to an over-the-counter painkiller like Advil in terms of pain reduction.

The emotional responses evoked by music, particularly the experience of "musical chills", may play a pivotal role in blocking pain signals, according to the researchers. However, further research is required to validate this theory.

The study also discovered that individuals who listened to bittersweet and emotionally moving music experienced less pain, especially if they had a preference for such compositions.

While these findings are promising, it is important to approach them with caution. The research has certain limitations, including the duration of music exposure and the small number of participants.

Nevertheless, this research opens up a new avenue for exploring the potential benefits of music therapy in pain management.