

Music Therapy in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)



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Music Therapy in the NICU



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Music Stimuli in the NICU



Music Stimuli in the NICU



- ❧ Providing music to the premature infant
 - ❧ Live is most effective
 - ❧ What other infants will be hearing the music
 - ❧ Using controlled speaker

- ❧ Lullabies promote language development with
 - ❧ emphasis on vowels
 - ❧ rising/falling phrases
 - ❧ recognition of soothing sounds
 - ❧ can be provided in the native language of the infant's family

Music Stimuli in the NICU



- ❧ Recorded Music
 - ❧ Must be at least 28 weeks gestation
 - ❧ Shortening Length of Stay
 - ❧ More stable oxygen saturation levels

- ❧ Elements of Music
 - ❧ Steady, Constant, Soothing
 - ❧ Major Key
 - ❧ Mother's voice

Signs of Overstimulation




☞ Positive Signs of Stimulation:

- ☞ Smiling
- ☞ Vocalizing
- ☞ Eye Contact
- ☞ Cuddling
- ☞ Head Orientation

☞ Negative Signs of Stimulation:

- ☞ Crying
- ☞ Grimacing
- ☞ Halt Hand
- ☞ Tongue Protrusion
- ☞ Finger Splay
- ☞ Turning Away

Neurodevelopmental Stimulation

- ☞ At least 32 weeks gestation 
- ☞ 3 pounds and medically stable
- ☞ Increase tolerance to stimulation in the NICU to prepare for discharge
- ☞ Train parents how to use music with their infants and learn about signs of overstimulation
- ☞ Females went home on average 15.7 days sooner and males were discharged on average 8.2 days earlier.
- ☞ Females responded more with guitar and singing and males responded more positively with only singing, no guitar.
- ☞ Increased visitation from parents

Walworth, D., Standley, J., Robertson, A., Smith, A., Swedberg, O., & Peyton, J. J. (2012). Effects of neurodevelopmental stimulation on premature infants in neonatal intensive care: Randomized controlled trial. *Neonatal Network: The Journal of Neonatal Nursing*, 31(5), 311-316

Feeding



- ❧ Suck, Swallow, Breathe Response
- ❧ Pacifier Activated Lullaby
 - ❧ Used to increase sucking endurance
 - ❧ To develop sucking burst of 10-12 sucks before pause
 - ❧ To reduce pain perception
 - ❧ Decrease Oral Aversion

Standley, J., Cassidy, J., Grant, R., Cevalco, A., Szuch, C., Nguyen, J. et al. (2010). The effect of music reinforcement for non-nutritive sucking via the PAL (Pacifier-Activated Lullabies Apparatus) on achievement of oral feeding by premature infants in the NICU. *Pediatric Nursing*, 36, 138-145.

Older Infants



- ❧ 38-40 weeks old
- ❧ Developmentally Appropriate Recommendations
 - ❧ Auditory
 - ❧ Visual
 - ❧ Tactile
 - ❧ Vestibular

Family Support



- ∞ Lullaby Writing
- ∞ Parent Education
- ∞ Family Dynamics
 - ∞ Emotions
 - ∞ Denial
 - ∞ Anxiety and worry
 - ∞ Detachment, uncertainty
 - ∞ Grief
 - ∞ Economic Concerns
 - ∞ Transportation
 - ∞ Work
 - ∞ Cost of hospitalization