

Application of Music Therapy in the Treatment of Patients with Chronic Diseases

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Abstract

Music therapy is a non-pharmacological treatment tool in medical therapy, a relatively new therapeutic technique that has been proven to have an important role in the treatment of chronic diseases in the elderly at home and abroad. Through applying music therapy to the treatment of elderly patients with chronic diseases, patients could benefit from physiological, psychological and social aspects. Thus, it could help patients relieve pain, reduce the level of anxiety, improve the immunity of the body and increase comfort, keep a stable situation, which speed up the process of treatment of elderly chronic diseases. This paper mainly focuses on the principles of music therapy and describe some application of music therapy that already applied to the treatment of elderly patients with chronic diseases.

Keywords

Music Therapy; Chronic Disease; Application.

1. Introduction

Music therapy refers to psychotherapy through music, hypnosis, and is based on a functionalist view of art that uses music to promote physical, mental health and develop personality. Many researchers classify music therapy to the category of applied music (psychology). Old age is a critical period in the development of life. Weakening of the ability of the elderly to adapt to life, with the growth of age and changes in life such as business, marriage, the loss of relatives, etc., Elderly have plenty of physical and mental health problems, which could not be overlooked during treatment. According to relevant data, 80%-90% of the elderly are suffering chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, glaucoma, cataracts, etc., which are often accompanied by anxiety, depression, panic and other negative emotions. The treatment of chronic diseases in the elderly becomes more significant, but due to the long-term use of drugs in the treatment of elderly, some elderly people have antibodies to some drugs. However, music therapy is a better way to avoid this deficiency. Without using drugs, music therapy cures these diseases by causing physiological and psychological changes in the human emotional center; by influencing the function of the nervous system, cardiovascular system, endocrine system and digestive system. Music therapy can improve chronic diseases in the elderly through a more comfortable and relaxing way. Therefore, it's worth studying the application of music therapy of elderly treatment for doctors. This essay will firstly discuss problems and situation with the use of music therapy. Following this, it will introduce some typical effects when applying music therapy to elderly chronic diseases. And then, it will demonstrate some methods to improve the application of music therapy.

2. Problems and situation with the use of music therapy

On one hand, although music therapy only became a relatively mature technique in the 1840s, there are many cases of healthier physiological conditions achieved through music therapy, even many elderly people recovered through music therapy. But it's revealed that music

therapy has not been widely promoted, there are relatively few people who have studied music therapy professionally. Besides, many elderly people can seldom get music therapy from their doctors, so that these patients do not have a deeper understanding of the reliability of music therapy. The long-term effectiveness of music therapy is often overlooked when treating diseases such as hypertension and diabetes.

On the other hand, music therapy is also inadequate for related techniques and equipment. In many hospitals at home and abroad, there are few professional music therapy devices, nor have the doctors training of music therapy skills. Mainly, many doctors treat elderly chronic disease patients with medication, resulting in many elderly chronic disease patients having little exposure to music therapy and only taking medication all year round as therapeutic interventions. Music therapy is one of the therapeutic tools that need to be added to patients' treatment in the future, which should be highly valued through treatment in elderly chronic disease patient.

3. Typical applications of music therapy for chronic diseases of the elderly

3.1. Application to Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients.

In AD patients, there is often a decline in cognitive function and even a lack of recognition of family members and even violent behaviors, which makes AD patients in a difficult situation. In real life, many AD patients may even be treated unfairly. The results show that music therapy has a positive effect on reducing violence in AD patients, improving their cognitive abilities, and soothing their moods and keeping their physical state at a relatively stable level. At the same time, the routine use of music therapy with AD patients in some nursing homes or elderly care facilities can also reduce the levels of caregiver stress and soothe caregivers, thereby reducing their workload. These experimental data amply demonstrate that the combination of joyful and light-hearted songs and simple tapping movements can improve patients' memory in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. For AD patients, listening to songs such as *Little Sunflower* and *Love Together* could soothe their emotions, thus improve AD patients' body situation.

3.2. Application in patients with hypertension

With the increase of age, the prevalence of hypertension in the elderly gradually increases. Hypertension has become one of the main diseases of the elderly, but in the current treatment, doctors often use drug interventions to stabilize the blood pressure, and many hypertensive patients often have to maintain their health by taking medication for years, which also brings a lot of financial burden to hypertensive patients and increases the sufferings of patients. Zhang Junxia (2010) applied choral training to the care of elderly patients with hypertension. Through a routine time of music relaxation therapy every day, the patient's blood pressure is decreased, respiration and heart rate is slowed down on a biofeedback device, myoelectricity decreased, blood volume increased, which has great efficiency of stabilizing blood pressure. For hypertensive patients, it is usually recommended to enjoy soothing and relaxing music, such as some light music, white noise, alpha brainwave music, etc., to reduce the heart load of hypertensive patients.

3.3. Application in elderly patients with depression

With the degeneration of physical functions, the elderly become more emotionally sensitive, easily feel lost to the things around them, and unable to find pleasure, thus more likely to lead to depression in the elderly, which can lead to serious consequences in severe cases, and could also bring great pain to the patients. According to Ai Chunqi, whose research selected 60 cases of elderly depression patients randomly divided into 30 cases in the treatment group and 30 cases in the control group, both groups received conventional treatment. In this research, the treatment group was supplemented with five elements music therapy, once or twice a day, for

30 min each time, and for 8 weeks. The Hamilton Depression Inventory (HAMT) and Hamilton Anxiety Inventory (HAMA) were scored before and after patients' treatment. The results clearly showed that the depression scale score of the group with music therapy was lower than that of the control group without music therapy. During the treatment, some upbeat music could create a relaxed and happy environment for the depressed patients, leading the emotional center of the depressed patients to mobilize happy emotions, which effectively improved the situation of the elderly depressed patients.

4. Effective Measures to improve the situation of Music Therapy

To promote music therapy on a larger scale, it is necessary to expand the popularity of music therapy through various publicity methods so that older people will be more aware of music therapy and thus be willing to accept treatment through music therapy to promote the treatment of chronic diseases in the elderly. On the one hand, hospitals can train some doctors to learn the theory and methods of music therapy. Also, hospitals should be equipped with corresponding music therapy equipment, such as intelligent music feedback relaxation systems. Hospitals can publicize more successful cases of music therapy on bulletin boards, thus prompting elderly chronic disease patients to choose music therapy and increasing the popularity of music therapy. On one hand, hospitals should establish a perfect music therapy system and set up special areas for music therapy to provide a relaxing music therapy environment for elderly patients with chronic diseases (Yu Yuanyuan, 2019). At the same time, relevant researchers should carry on more research on music therapy, try their best to improve music therapy methods, and make music therapy more reliable so that more elderly patients with chronic diseases can use music therapy to obtain a healthy body. On the other hand, a sharing system should be established among hospitals by using the internet. This allows doctors to upload their own successful cases, sharing both their experience in music therapy treating and summary of music therapy methods, so that doctors can refer to the successful cases. With more successful cases to follow, patients can understand the importance of music therapy more quickly, thus they are more likely to choose music therapy treatment.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, music therapy belongs to the non-pharmacological means of medical treatment and is a relatively new therapeutic technique, which can influence the human emotional center to achieve the purpose of curing diseases. According to reliable studies, it plays as an important role in the treatment of chronic diseases in the elderly. However, at present, there are few cases where music therapy is really applied to elderly patients with chronic diseases, and there is a lack of professional music therapy equipment. In the future, hospitals should pay attention to the role of music therapy in treating elderly patients with chronic diseases, and researchers should continue to develop more advanced music therapy techniques. Music therapy could help improve some typical chronic diseases such as Alzheimer's disease (AD) patients, hypertension, depression. Patients could benefit from music therapy through reducing the aggressive behavior of AD patients, improving their cognitive abilities, maximizing their social skills, self-care abilities, decrease blood pressure, slow down heart etc., To improve the application of music therapy in chronic diseases of the elderly, it is not only necessary to make the elderly patients have a clear understanding of music therapy; at the same time, it is also necessary to update the music therapy equipment and establish a better music therapy medical environment; moreover, it is necessary to improve the medical level of doctors, provide training to doctors, enrich medical practitioners' experience in music therapy. Only by this way can elderly patients with chronic diseases get better treatment.

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