

Does listening to music help adults who suffer from insomnia?

Clinical Question	What are the effects of listening to music, on sleep, in adults with insomnia?
Bottom Line	<p>Listening to music may have a moderate to large beneficial effect on sleep quality in different populations experiencing insomnia symptoms. Limited conclusions can be drawn on the effect of music listening on other aspects of sleep or on related physiological and psychological aspects of daytime function, since few trials reported these outcomes. Subjective measures suggest that participants may experience improvements in sleep-onset latency, total sleep time and sleep efficiency with the music intervention with broad confidence intervals ranging from small to large effect sizes.</p> <p>All included trials used music that was characterised as sedative or relaxing. However, these included a number of different musical styles (e.g. classical, new age, jazz, etc.), and at this point, it is not clear if some types of music may be more effective than others. There was no difference in the effect on sleep quality between trials using researcher-selected music and trials giving the participants a choice among a number of preselected types of music.</p>
Caveat	All included trials were at high risk of bias on at least one of the rated items; consequently, the results of this review need to be interpreted with caution. Due to the nature of the intervention, blinding of the participants was not possible, and not all trials reported blinding of outcome assessors. This may result in overestimation of the treatment effects, especially since most trials used a self-report questionnaire to assess the main outcome of sleep quality.
Context	Insomnia is a common problem in modern society. It is associated with reduced quality of life and impairments in physical and mental health. Listening to music is widely used as a sleep aid, but it remains unclear if it can actually improve insomnia in adults.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Jespersen KV, Pando-Naude V, Koenig J, Jennum P, Vuust P. Listening to music for insomnia in adults. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2022, Issue 8. Art. No.: CD010459. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD010459.pub3. This review contains 13 trials in the review with a total of 1007 participants.

Pearls No. 708, August 2022, written by Assoc Professor Vanessa MB Jordan.

Systematic review link:

<https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD010459.pub3/full>