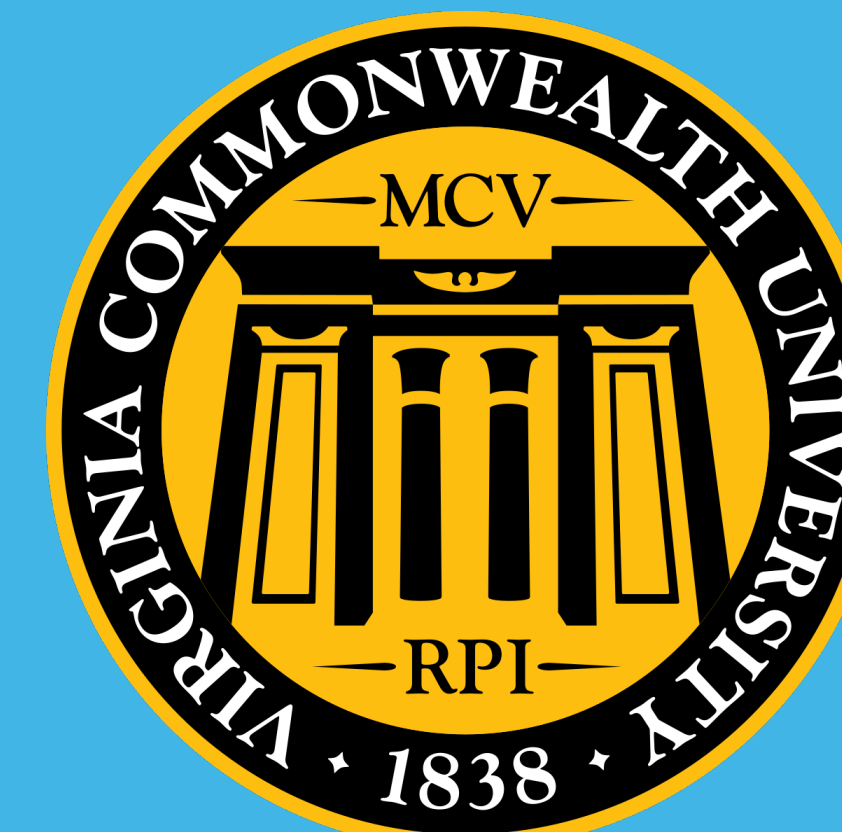


Antidepressants Versus Music Therapy: Which Treatment Is Better for Treating Depression in Parkinson's disease?



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Introduction

- The multidisciplinary field of music and medicine is currently being investigated for its role in depression management in Parkinson's disease (PD)
- Treatment of depression in PD is important since depression affects other factors in PD like cognition and mortality¹
- Antidepressants, the current form of treatment despite having limited trials on PD subjects, are reported to have mixed results in PD populations
- Music therapy, whose studies are also limited in nature, are reported to have positive potential in PD populations
- Ambiguous results of antidepressants in PD patients warrant further research into music therapy as an alternative form of depression treatment in PD.

Methods

This research compares the effects on depression in patients with PD as a result of the use of antidepressants and music therapy. This information was collected by gathering studies that focused on each type of treatment separately and analyzing the numbers produced as a result of the patient-reported outcome measure in depression.

Results

- Results of a meta-analysis conducted by Daniel Weintraub suggest no difference between antidepressant and placebo treatment in PD depression²
- PD patients do not respond as well to antidepressant treatments as non-PD patients²
- In The Individual Therapeutic Singing Program for PD (ITSP-PD), the average Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS) scores were significantly lower ($p=.018$) directly after therapy and then increased in a 6-month follow-up (F/U) after therapy³

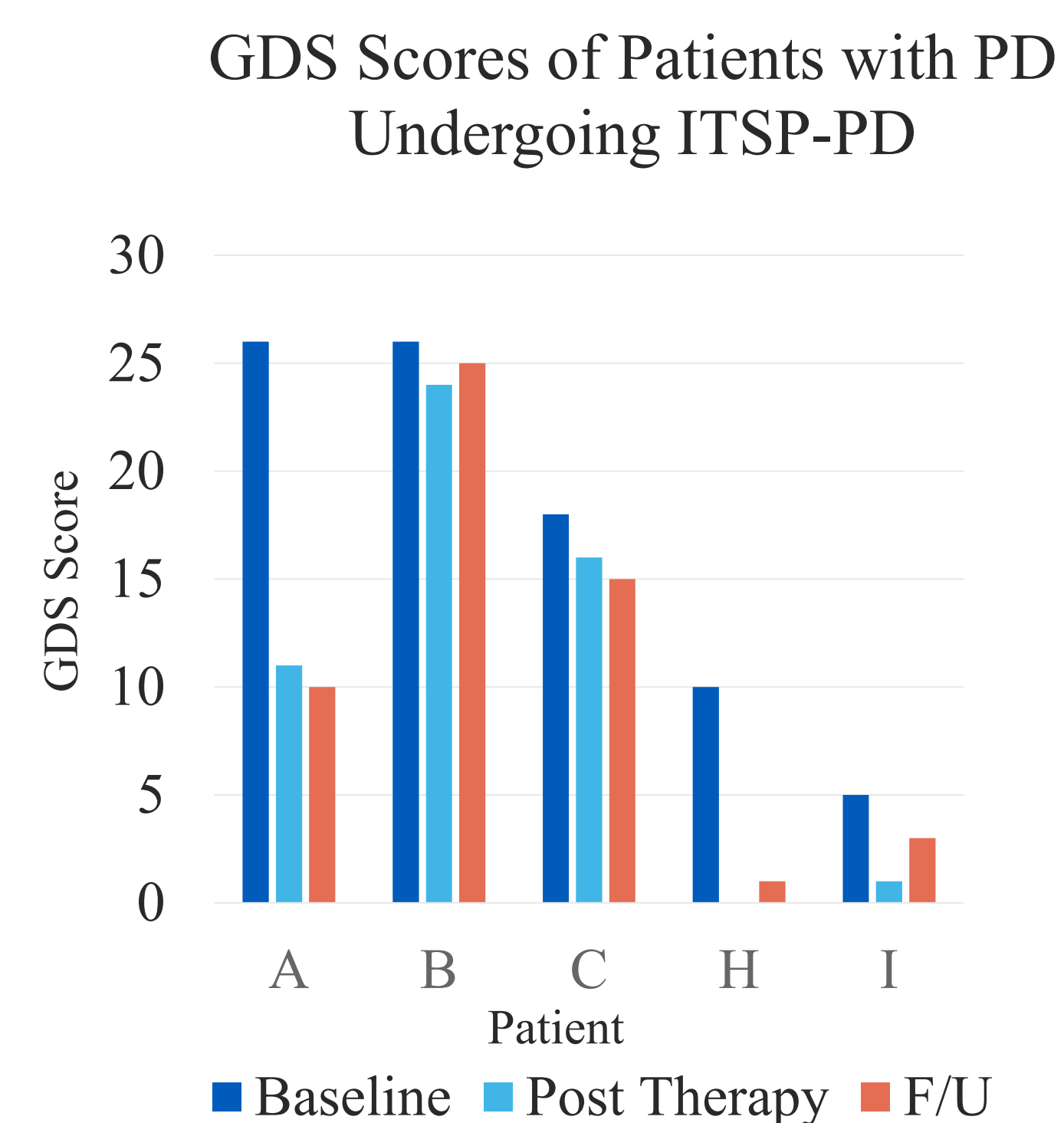


Figure 1. The GDS scores of patients with PD that underwent ITSP-PD are shown pre-therapy, post-therapy, and 6 month follow-up.

- A similar trend can be seen when patients with PD took drum circle classes for 12 weeks

- A participant in the drum study said, "I learned the importance of connecting to the group in a joyful way. . . It was great being in a drumming circle instead of a drooling circle"⁴

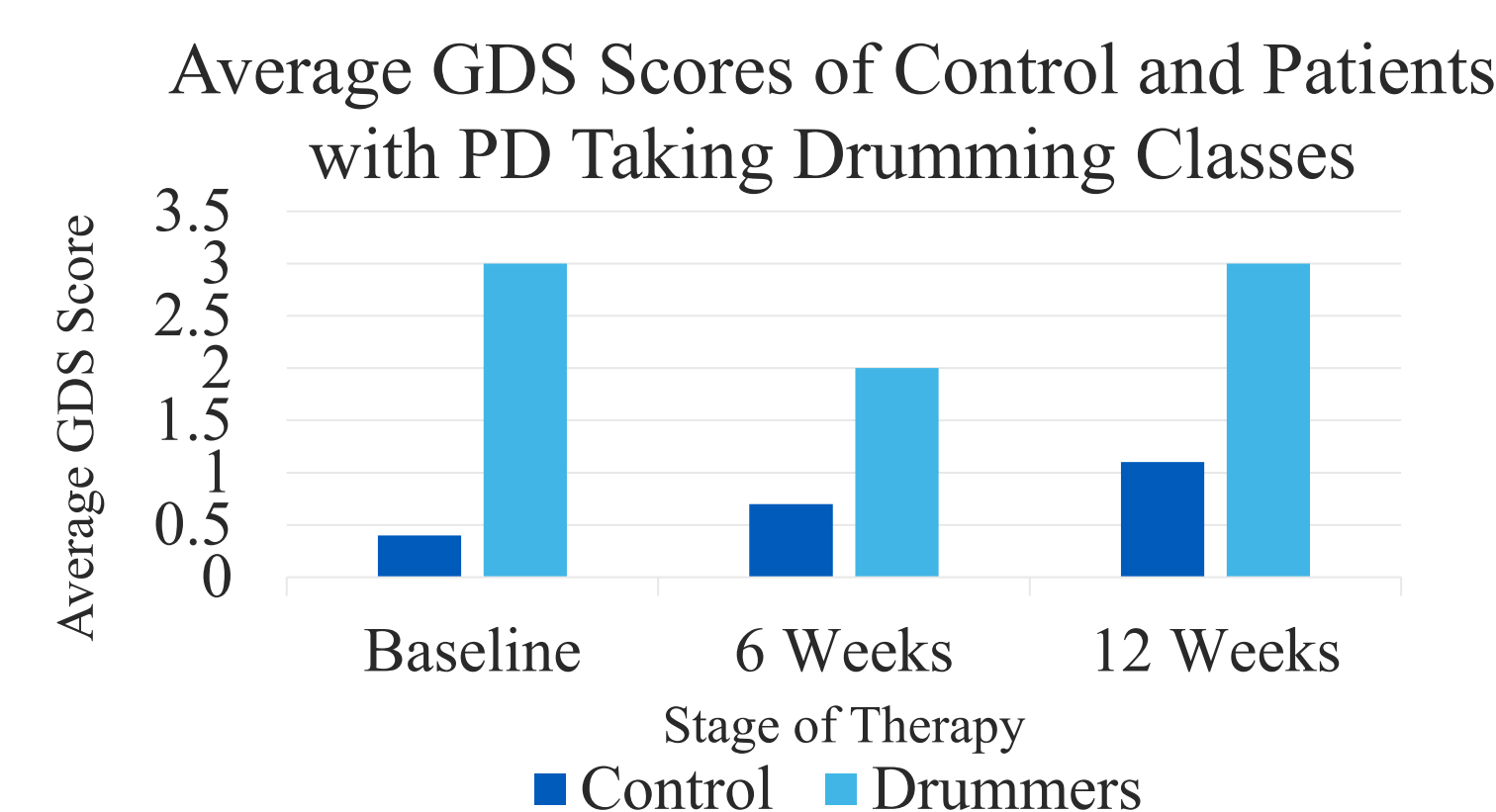


Figure 2. The average GDS scores of the control group and the group that took the classes are shown side by side at baseline, after 6 weeks of classes, and after 12 weeks of classes.

Conclusions

- Antidepressants can improve depression in PD but have limitations
- Lower GDS scores post-music therapy indicate improved depression in PD patients, but their rise after a while of therapy raises questions about the long-term impacts of music therapy
- More research for effective management of PD depression needs to continue given the lack of studies on this topic and other limitations
- With the same standardized patient-reported outcome measure, these two depression management treatments should be compared in future research.



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