



*The risk of asymmetry in sound exposure among musicians playing classical music*

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Musicians, while playing instruments, are often exposed to loud sounds which can cause hearing loss and other hearing deficiencies. Instruments which are asymmetrical sources of sound or which are held asymmetrically may cause unequal sound exposure for the right and left ear, which can lead to asymmetric hearing loss. The aim of this study was to determine how asymmetrical the exposure to sound is for musicians playing particular instruments. Sound levels were measured with the use of two-channel noise dosimeters, with microphones placed on the musicians' shoulders, next to the right and left ear. The essence of using noise dosimetry was to take into account various forms of musical activities, including individual practice and playing within musical groups. The obtained data indicated significant interaural asymmetry in sound exposure for musicians playing the violin, viola, flute and harp, resulting either from properties of their own instrument or because of the sound coming from other instruments in the ensemble.