

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEY ON THE MAIN MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS RELATED TO THE USE OF CHORD INSTRUMENTS IN PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS

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Background and Aims

Performing music require considerable physical effort and, being a prolonged activity, exposes musicians to the possible development of musculoskeletal disorders (MSKDs) that can influence their health and career. The aim of the study is to collect concrete data on the prevalence of MSKDs related to the use of chord instruments in professional musicians in order to outline a complete epidemiological picture. This could lead to targeted intervention and optimized preventive strategies.

Methods

A questionnaire composed of 14 multiple choice questions was delivered to chord instrument professional musicians being, part of international orchestras. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections: demographic information, type of chord instrument used, individual musical experience and possible presence of MSKDs suffered during musical activity.

Results

51 professional musicians were enrolled. Among them 41.2% suffered from one or more impairments related to the use of the musical instrument. The most common found were: tendinitis (36.4%), localized inflammatory states (bursitis and joint inflammation, 22.7%), muscle tension and widespread pain (18.2%), nerve impairment (De Quervain's syndrome and ulnar nerve entrapment, 13.6%) and vertebral protrusions (9.1%). Over 47% of participants reported persistent or recurrent symptoms, which significantly affected their musical practice.

Conclusion

MSKDs are a significant problem among professional musicians. Despite preventive measures such as regular breaks and stretching, a portion of the population examined continues to suffer from chronic symptoms. Just a few musicians regularly consult a physiatrist to prevent MSKDs, thus clearly highlighting the need for proper prevention through regular medical consultations and management of their MSKDs. It would be appropriate therefore to introduce specific education and prevention programs for musicians, focused on ergonomic techniques for musical practice and on the management of MSKDs.

Keywords: Musicians, injuries, physical therapy