



Study Links Infrasound to Reported Hauntings

Description

A recent study, inspired by a conversation between neuroscientist Kale Scatterty and lead researcher Schmaltz, investigated how infrasound—sound below the range of human hearing—affects stress responses in humans. This research follows Scatterty's 2023 paper, which found that zebrafish exhibit anxiety and avoidance behaviours in response to infrasound. The aim was to determine whether humans experience similar physiological stress responses, specifically an increase in cortisol levels, which is a hormone associated with stress.

In a controlled lab experiment, thirty-six participants were isolated in a room and exposed to either calming music, typical of a yoga class, or unsettling ambient sounds. Half of the participants also received exposure to infrasound produced by concealed subwoofers. Expectations suggested that infrasound would amplify feelings of relaxation with calming music and intensify discomfort with unsettling sounds.

Contrary to these predictions, the results indicated that participants universally felt more irritated and unsettled during infrasound exposure, regardless of the type of music. Further, cortisol levels rose significantly among those exposed to infrasound. Notably, participants were unable to reliably detect the presence of infrasound, highlighting a potential unconscious physiological response to this kind of sound.

Though these findings are significant, Schmaltz cautioned against attributing hauntings solely to infrasound. He emphasised that while it may contribute to certain eerie experiences, several other factors exist, including suggestibility, which has been previously explored in the context of ghostly perceptions. As such, infrasound may be one element among many that influence human responses to supposed hauntings.

The research opens avenues for further investigation into how infrasound interacts with human perception and emotion in various contexts.

Vocabulary List:

1. **infrasound** //ˈɪnfrəˌsaʊnd// (noun): sound below the range of human hearing
2. **cortisol** //ˈkɔːtɪsɔːl// (noun): a hormone your body makes when stressed
3. **physiological** //ˌfɪziəˈlɒdʒɪkəl// (adjective): related to the body and how it works
4. **suggestibility** //səˌdʒɛstɪˈbɪlɪti// (noun): how easily people accept ideas from others
5. **intensify** //ɪnˈtɛnsəˌfaɪ// (verb): to make something stronger or more extreme
6. **avoidance** //əˈvɔɪdəns// (noun): trying to stay away from something unpleasant



Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. What did the recent study aim to investigate?
 - Option: The effects of music on human stress
 - Option: How infrasound affects stress responses in humans
 - Option: The behavior of zebrafish
 - Option: The relationship between cortisol levels and sound
2. Who inspired the recent study on infrasound?
 - Option: Kale Scatterty
 - Option: Schmaltz
 - Option: Thirty-six participants
 - Option: Cortisol levels
3. How many participants were involved in the controlled lab experiment?
 - Option: 24
 - Option: 30
 - Option: 36
 - Option: 40
4. What type of sounds were participants exposed to during the study?
 - Option: Calming music and unsettling ambient sounds
 - Option: Only calming sounds
 - Option: Calming music and deafening noises
 - Option: Unsettling ambient sounds only
5. What was a key finding regarding cortisol levels among participants exposed to infrasound?
 - Option: Cortisol levels decreased
 - Option: Cortisol levels remained the same
 - Option: Cortisol levels rose significantly
 - Option: Cortisol levels were unaffected by sound
6. What potential unconscious response was highlighted in the study?
 - Option: Detecting sound changes



- Option: Emotional instability
- Option: Reliably detecting infrasound
- Option: Amplified relaxation

True-False

- 7. The study found that infrasound exposure reduced irritation among participants.
- 8. Zebrafish were found to exhibit anxiety in response to infrasound in a previous study.
- 9. Participants could reliably detect the presence of infrasound during the experiment.
- 10. Schmaltz believes infrasound can solely account for ghostly experiences.
- 11. The research suggests multiple factors influence human responses to hauntings.
- 12. The primary focus of the study was on the effect of music on stress alone.

Gap-Fill

- 13. The study investigated how infrasound affects stress responses in humans, specifically focusing on an increase in cortisol levels, which is a hormone associated with _____.
- 14. Thirty-six participants were isolated in a room and exposed to calming music or _____ sounds.
- 15. Expectations suggested that infrasound would amplify feelings of relaxation with calming music and _____ discomfort with unsettling sounds.
- 16. Participants universally felt more irritated and unsettled during _____ exposure.
- 17. Schmaltz cautioned against attributing hauntings solely to infrasound, emphasising that several other factors, including _____, may also influence ghostly perceptions.



18. The research opens avenues for further investigation into how infrasound interacts with human _____ and emotion in various contexts.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. How infrasound affects stress responses in humans 2. Kale Scatterty 3. 36 4. Calming music and unsettling ambient sounds 5. Cortisol levels rose significantly 6. Reliably detecting infrasound

True-False: 7. False 8. True 9. False 10. False 11. True 12. False

Gap-Fill: 13. stress 14. unsettling 15. intensify 16. infrasound 17. suggestibility 18. perception

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What process do plants use to convert sunlight into energy?
Option: Respiration
Option: Photosynthesis
Option: Digestion
Option: Fermentation
2. Which organelle is primarily responsible for photosynthesis in plant cells?
Option: Mitochondria
Option: Nucleus
Option: Chloroplasts
Option: Ribosomes
3. What is the role of NADPH in the photosynthesis process?
Option: Energy production
Option: Electron carrier
Option: Oxygen production
Option: Carbon fixation
4. What condition is characterized by redness, swelling, and pain as a response to injury?
Option: Infection
Option: Inflammation
Option: Metastasis
Option: Mutation



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5. Which hormone is often released during stress and helps regulate metabolism?
- Option: Adrenaline
 - Option: Insulin
 - Option: Cortisol
 - Option: Thyroxine
6. What treatment is commonly used to combat cancer by targeting rapidly dividing cells?
- Option: Radiation therapy
 - Option: Chemotherapy
 - Option: Immunotherapy
 - Option: Surgery
7. What small plastic particles pose a significant environmental threat due to their prevalence in oceans?
- Option: Nanoplastics
 - Option: Microplastics
 - Option: Macrophages
 - Option: Synthetic fibers
8. What term describes the spread of cancer cells from the original site to other parts of the body?
- Option: Invasion
 - Option: Metastasis
 - Option: Benign growth
 - Option: Remission
9. What refers to the likelihood of developing a disease based on genetic or environmental factors?
- Option: Immunity
 - Option: Resistance
 - Option: Susceptibility
 - Option: Infection

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

10. Chloroplasts contain structures called _____ that are essential for the light-dependent reactions of photosynthesis.
11. Research at the _____ level often involves studying materials and structures at the atomic or molecular scale.
12. Many people take dietary _____ to improve their health and fill nutritional gaps.



13. Efforts to _____ the effects of climate change have become increasingly important.
14. The strategy of _____ can sometimes prevent conflict but may lead to unresolved issues.
15. A single-celled organism known as a _____ can be beneficial or harmful to humans.
16. Some strains of bacteria have become _____ to traditional antibiotics.
17. Sometimes, attempts at resolving conflict can be _____ if not handled carefully.
18. Water treatment plants use _____ processes to remove contaminants from drinking water.
19. The _____ of a new drug is often determined through clinical trials.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

20. The degree of a person's openness to suggestions can vary significantly.
21. The storm began to as winds reached over 100 miles per hour.
22. The process by which your body converts food into energy is known as metabolism.
23. Sounds below the frequency of 20 Hz are referred to as infrasound.
24. Ferrofluid is a liquid that becomes magnetized in the presence of a magnetic field.
25. Proper waste is essential for environmental protection and public health.
26. There are several types of that can harm aquatic ecosystems.
27. Engineers often create a to test new designs before full-scale production.
28. Genetic can lead to variations in traits among organisms.
29. When tissues are damaged, they often exhibit signs of as part of the healing process.



Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Photosynthesis 2. Chloroplasts 3. Electron carrier 4. Inflammation 5. Cortisol
6. Chemotherapy 7. Microplastics 8. Metastasis 9. Susceptibility

Gap-Fill: 10. thylakoids 11. nanoscale 12. supplements 13. mitigate 14. avoidance 15. bacterium 16.
resistant 17. counterproductive 18. filtration 19. efficacy

Matching sentence: 1. suggestibility 2. intensify 3. metabolism 4. infrasound 5. ferrofluid 6. disposal
7. contaminants 8. prototype 9. mutations 10. inflammation

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL6

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