



## Role of Cardio Drumming on Mental Health



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**Cardio drumming is a full body aerobic activity that involves rhythmic drumming onto an exercise ball.**

### Background

Patients in psychiatric hospitals often experience high levels of stress and poor self-esteem in their daily lives. For many patients, the COVID-19 pandemic amplified some of these difficulties, increasing feelings of isolation and anxiety. Experiencing high stress and low self-esteem can lead to chronic health conditions like heart disease in people living with mental health challenges.

Mental and physical health challenges often affect an individual's inpatient psychiatric experience. Cardio drumming, a form of exercise therapy which combines both music and exercise, may address some of these challenges. Using music during therapy sessions can help to reduce feelings of stress and improve self-esteem and drumming, as a form of exercise, can improve social well-being, self-regulation, sense of control, empathy, and interpersonal relationships.

### Purpose

- Assess connections between patient characteristics and stress and self-esteem following a cardio drumming session.
- Observe the impact of a cardio drumming session on stress and self-esteem among patients in a psychiatric hospital.

## Research Gap

- No study has examined cardio drumming effects on stress and self-esteem within a psychiatric setting.

## Study Design

In this study, 64 adult patients with different mental health conditions took part in a cardio drumming program at a state psychiatric hospital in Kentucky. Patients were asked about their feelings of stress and self-esteem before and after a 45-minute cardio drumming session.

Recreation therapists led participants through five choreographed drumming sessions. Each session included full body aerobic exercises, followed by breathing and stretching to cool down.

## Results

Of the 64 participants, 51.6% had a psychotic disorder, 12.5% had bipolar disorder, 17.2% had a mood disorder, and 18.8% had some other disorder like intellectual or developmental disability, personality disorder, or substance use disorder.

The average age of participants was 36.9 years, most were male (84.4 %), and White, non-Hispanic (81.3%).

Participants had lower stress and higher self-esteem scores after a cardio-drumming session demonstrating that cardio drumming may be an effective therapy to promote self-esteem, reduce stress, and support recovery for patients during a psychiatric hospital stay (Figure 1).

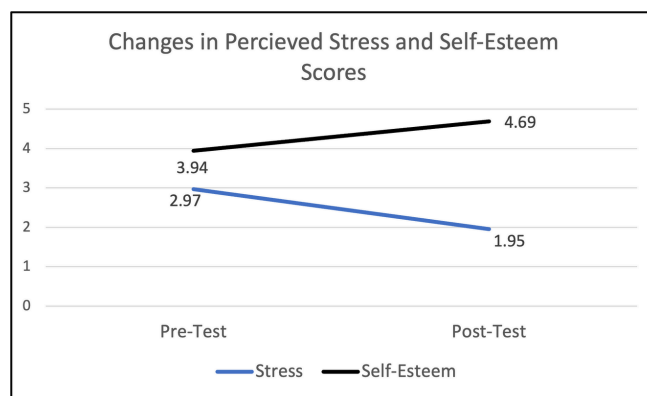


Figure 1: Change in stress and self-esteem scores before (left) and after (right) one cardio drumming session. Stress scores are blue and self-esteem scores are in black.

## Recommendations

- Cardio drumming can be an effective exercise therapy option to decrease stress and improve self-esteem for patients during psychiatric hospital stays.
- Cardio drumming may be a viable intervention for promoting positive health outcomes for patients living with a psychotic disorder as it is more likely to decrease stress scores.