



Prevalence of Pain Among College Music Students and Faculty

Jeremy L Stanek MD, Kevin D Komes MD, Fred A Murdock PhD
 Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation; University of Missouri

Introduction

- Previous studies have demonstrated significant performance-related pain among professional musicians
- No large-scale studies involving musicians at colleges have been performed

Objectives

- Determine prevalence and anatomic locations of pain among college music students and faculty
- Learn what those musicians do when they get pain

Methods

- Cross-sectional data collected via anonymous online survey distributed to college music programs across the United States
- Two prepaid \$50 credit cards randomly given as an incentive
- Data collected and analyzed using REDCap and Excel

Results

- 1007 survey responses were received
- 67% of college musicians experience pain when they play or sing (Figure 1)
- Highest prevalence of pain is among woodwind players (Figure 2)
- Most common sites for pain are upper back, lower back, and fingers of the right hand
- Most musicians utilize non-steroidal medications as well as ice/heat therapy (Figure 3)
- Most students seek help from their teacher or do not seek help at all (Figure 4)
- Fewer than 25% seek medical help
- 57% report pain is holding them back as a musician

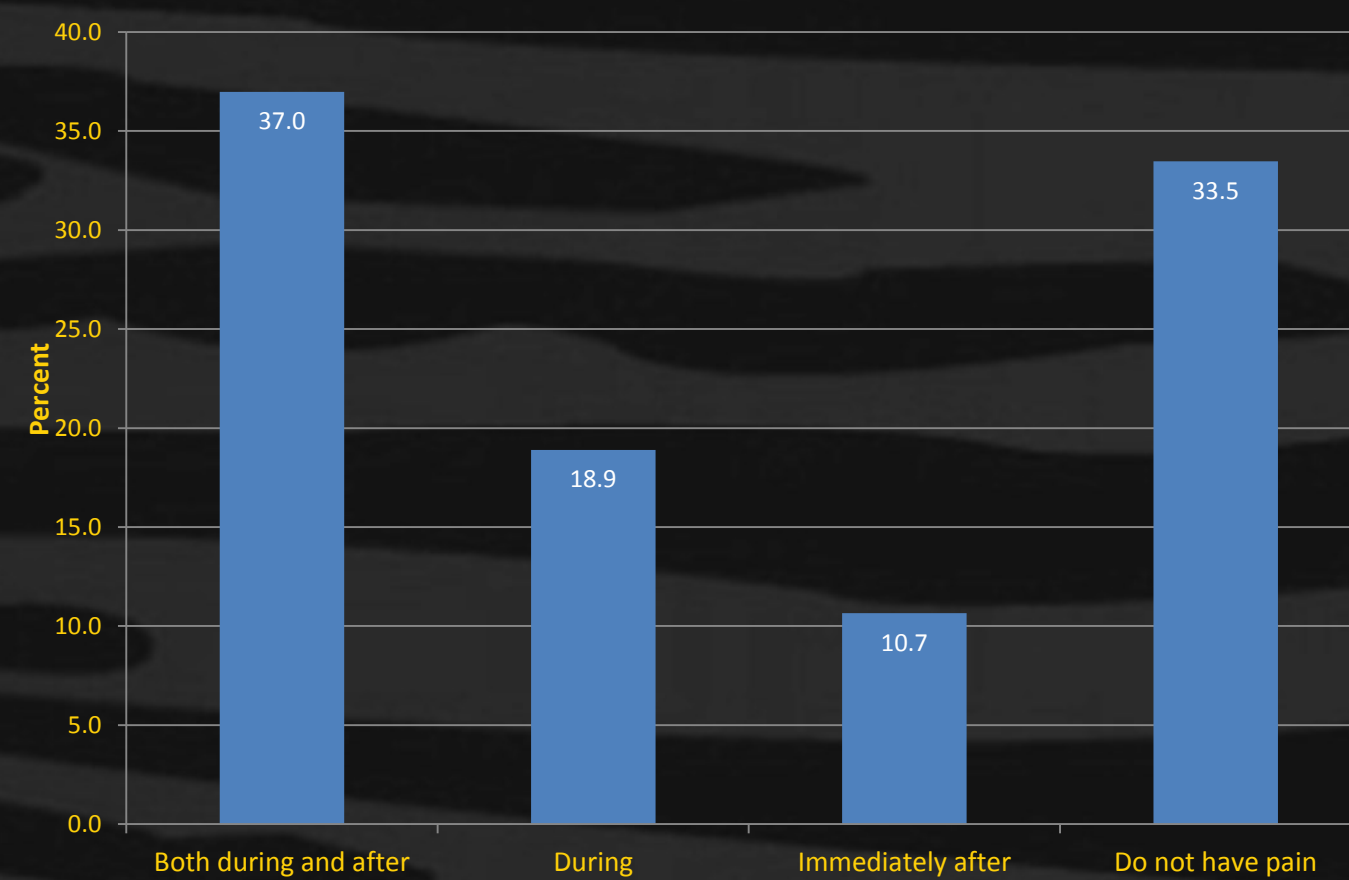


Figure 1: Pain when playing or singing

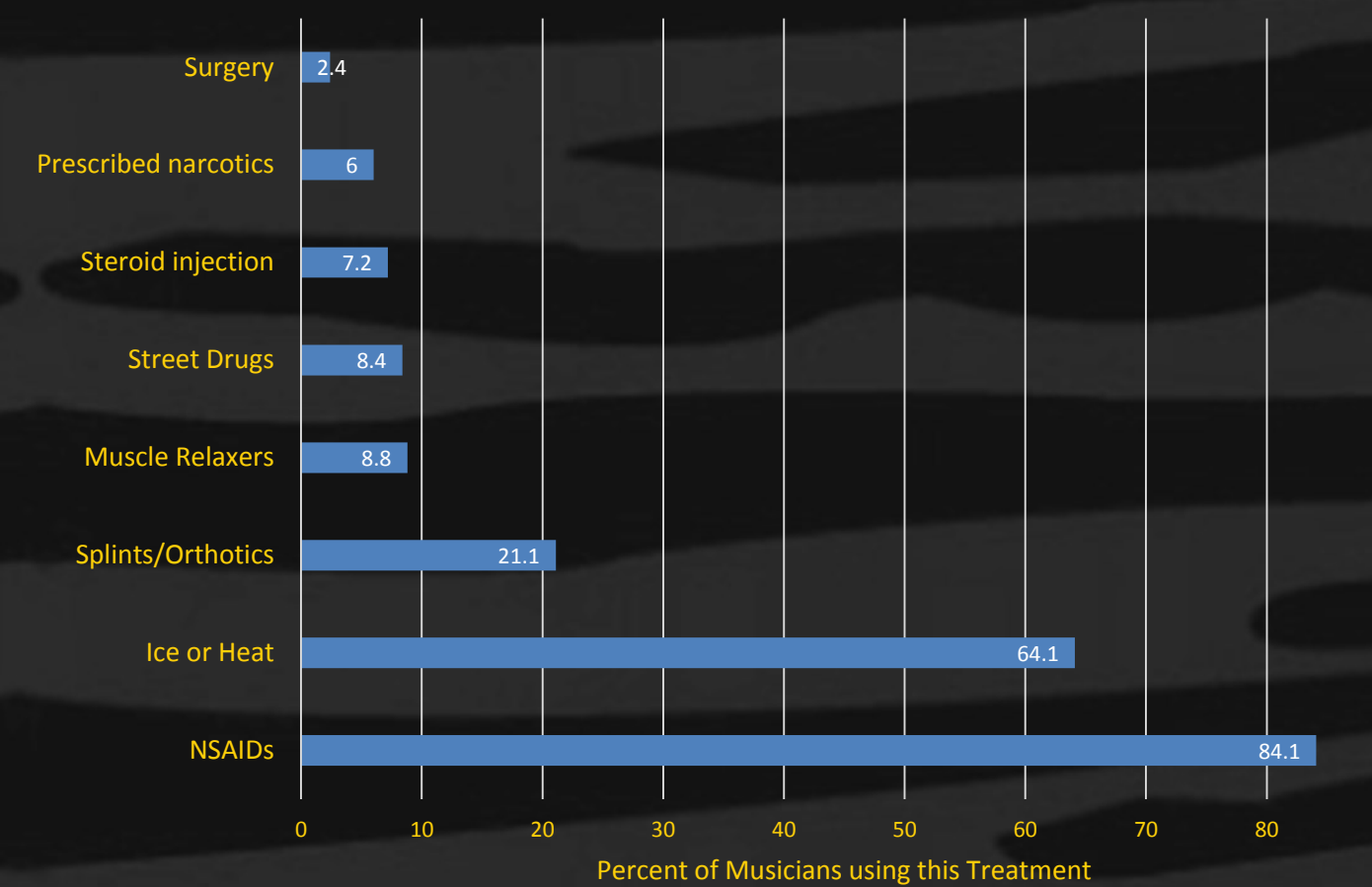


Figure 3: Treatments Musicians Utilize

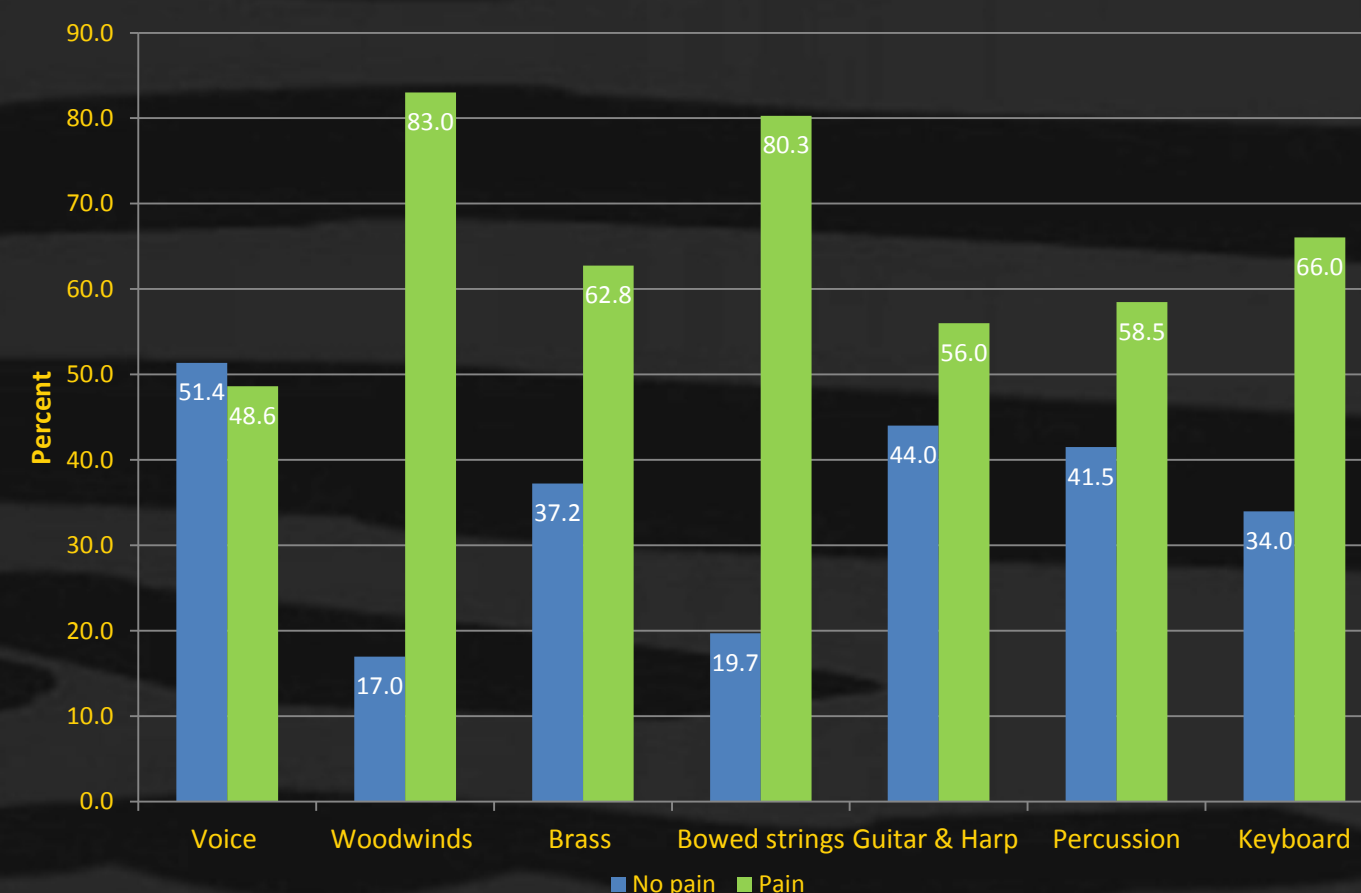


Figure 2: Pain by Family

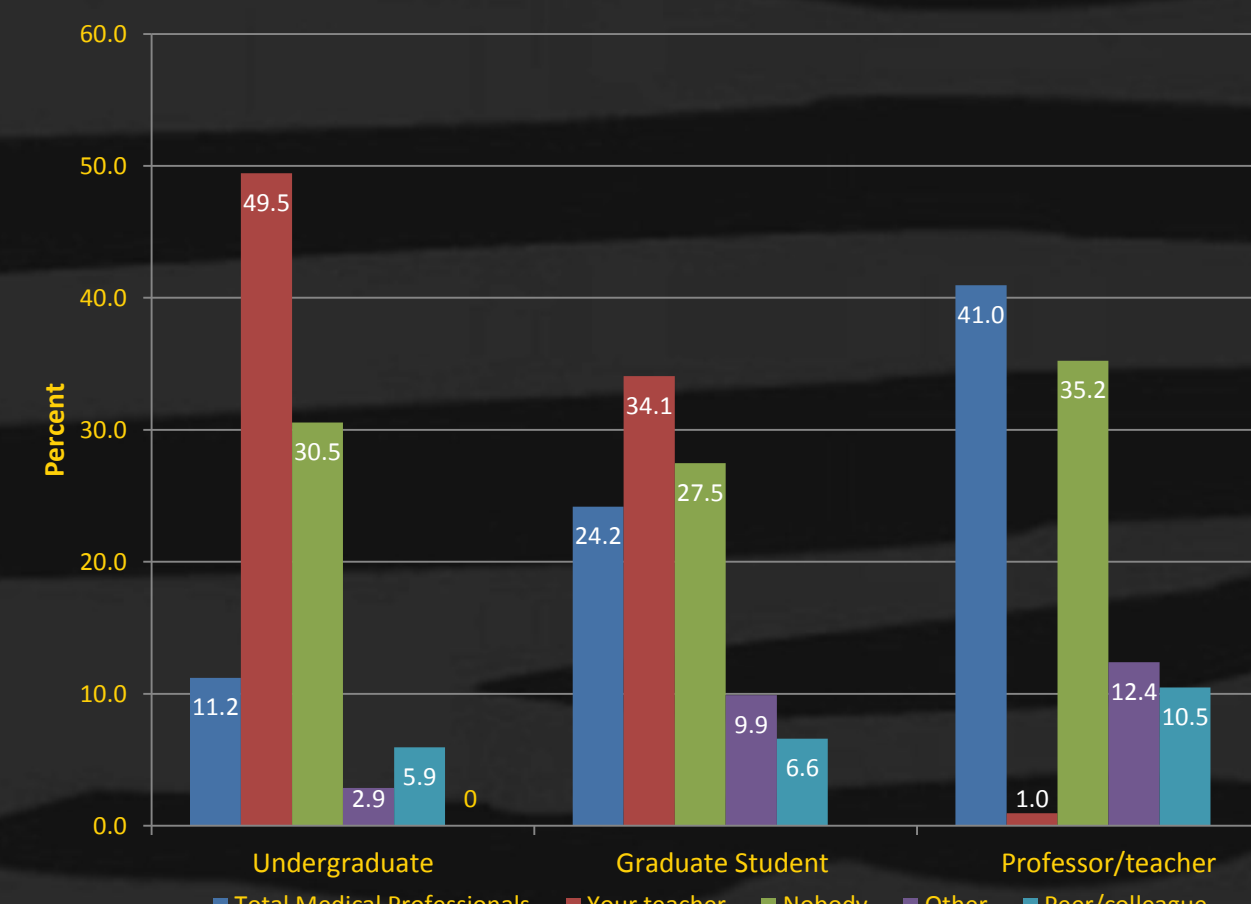


Figure 4: Whom Musicians Approach with Pain

Conclusion

- The majority of college music students and faculty experience pain when they play or sing
- Upper back is the most common site for performance-related pain
- Further research should be done to examine interventions for treatment and prevention of performance-related pain