

Scientific Article



Title

Misophonia: physiological investigations and case descriptions

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Abstract

Misophonia is a relatively unexplored chronic condition in which a person experiences autonomic arousal (analogous to an involuntary “fight-or-flight” response) to certain innocuous or repetitive sounds such as chewing, pen clicking, and lip smacking. Misophonics report anxiety, panic, and rage when exposed to trigger sounds, compromising their ability to complete everyday tasks and engage in healthy and normal social interactions. Across two experiments, we measured behavioral and physiological characteristics of the condition. Interviews (Experiment 1) with misophonics showed that the most problematic sounds are generally related to other people’s behavior (pen clicking, chewing sounds). Misophonics are however not bothered when they produce these “trigger” sounds themselves, and some report mimicry as a coping strategy. Next, (Experiment 2) we tested the hypothesis that misophonics’ subjective experiences evoke an anomalous physiological response to certain auditory stimuli. Misophonic individuals showed heightened ratings and skin conductance responses (SCRs) to auditory, but not visual stimuli, relative to a group of typically developed controls, supporting this general viewpoint and indicating that misophonia is a disorder that produces distinct autonomic effects not seen in typically developed individuals.

Source

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