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Effects of personal stereo use: pilot results from 20 university students

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Modern personal stereo systems have the ability to store thousands of music files in small, relatively low-cost, compact devices. The popularity and widespread presence of the MP3 player cannot go unnoticed in contemporary society. Given a sufficient noise level and listening duration, consumers are at risk of developing a noise-induced hearing loss. A study into the effects of personal stereo use will be carried out with the intention of investigating common noise exposure levels in realistic settings, user listening habits and the hearing status in a group of listeners. Noise exposure levels are to be obtained by using the manikin technique described in the ISO 11904-2 standard. The questionnaire to be presented to interested participants is designed to report personal stereo listening habits and to screen subjects for the hearing status evaluation. The hearing status of selected subjects will be evaluated through the use of conventional and possibly extended high-frequency audiometry, transient-evoked otoacoustic emissions and distortion product otoacoustic emission fine structures.