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Effects of music on laboratory animals

Listening to music has been shown to affect humans physiologically and psychologically. Studies using animal models to explore the effects of music on physiology, cognition and brain chemistry and morphology suggest that music exposure may have similar effects on animals. Alworth and Buerkle review the current research regarding music's effect on animals' physiology and behavior, specifically in relation to potential for music to be used as a means of improving animal welfare.

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Co-housing of breeding pairs prior to mating

It is common practice to breed laboratory mice in timed matings in order to obtain offspring of a precise age for study. Most timed matings involve housing males and females together for a limited time period, typically overnight. The efficiency of impregnation in timed matings is limited because many mouse pairs fail to mate during the brief co-housing period. Stiles and colleagues housed males and females in the same cage but separated by a transparent cage partition for 3 d before carrying out overnight timed matings. They then compared the number of matings that occurred and the number of offspring produced among breeding pairs that were co-housed and breeding pairs that were not co-housed before mating. Co-housing prior to mating resulted in more matings and in more pups per breeding pair. The authors suggest that prior partitioned co-housing may allow urine-borne pheromones originating from the opposite sex to induce female estrus and the expression of male and female mating behaviors.

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