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Neurosci Lett. 2011 Jan 3;487(1):12-6. doi: 10.1016/j.neulet.2010.09.064. Epub 2010 Oct 1.

Hydrogen in drinking water attenuates noise-induced hearing loss in guinea pigs

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PMID: 20888392 DOI: [10.1016/j.neulet.2010.09.064](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neulet.2010.09.064)

Abstract

It has been shown that molecular hydrogen acts as a therapeutic and preventive antioxidant by selectively reducing the hydroxyl radical, the most cytotoxic of the reactive oxygen species. In the present study, we tested the hypothesis that acoustic damage in guinea pigs can be attenuated by the consumption of molecular hydrogen. Guinea pigs received normal water or hydrogen-rich water for 14 days before they were exposed to 115 dB SPL 4-kHz octave band noise for 3h. Animals in each group underwent measurements for auditory brainstem response (ABR) or distortion-product otoacoustic emissions (DPOAEs) before the treatment (baseline) and immediately, 1, 3, 7, and 14 days after noise exposure. The ABR thresholds at 2 and 4 kHz were significantly better on post-noise days 1, 3, and 14 in hydrogen-treated animals when compared to the normal water-treated controls. Compared to the controls, the hydrogen-treated animals showed greater amplitude of DPOAE input/output growth functions during the recovery process, with statistical significance detected on post-noise days 3 and 7. These findings suggest that hydrogen can facilitate the recovery of hair cell function and attenuate noise-induced temporary hearing loss.

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