

**FCAPM/CFMTA National Conference**  
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## **Might music lessons be the “fountain of youth” for older adults?**

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At some point later this summer, I will begin posting on my blog site, [The Musician's Brain](#), a series of articles that discuss the cognitive advantages of studying a musical instrument for both children and adults, and how the cognitive reserve built through the study of music delays cognitive decline in the elderly.

In the meantime, for links to blog posts having to do with the cognitive advantages of studying music, click on [The Musician's Brain](#) in the menu, go to “Categories” in the R.H. column and click on “Benefits of studying music” and “Music Cognition” for links to blog posts that may be of interest.

Also:

### **Book**

Svard, Lois. “Does Music Really Make You Smarter?” In *The Musical Brain: What Students, Teachers, and Performers Need to Know*. Oxford University Press, 2023. (The 10<sup>th</sup> chapter in this book discusses in detail the cognitive advantages of studying music.)

### **Research articles**

The first of the three articles listed below is the study protocol for the Hannover-Geneva study that I spoke about in the presentation. The third addresses the positive influence of piano practice on quality of life as evidenced in the Hannover-Geneva study. The second is a review of several studies that explored the effect of musical practice on older people. Since it was published in 2018, it does not include the Hannover-Geneva study. All three articles are open access.

James, C. E., Altenmüller, E., Kliegel, M., et al. (2020). “Train the brain with music (TBM): brain plasticity and cognitive benefits induced by musical training in elderly people in Germany and Switzerland, a study protocol for an RCT comparing musical instrumental practice to sensitization to music.” *BMC Geriatrics* 20:418. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-020-01761-y>



Román-Caballero, R., Arnedo, M., Triviño, M., Lupiáñez, J. (2018). “Musical practice as an enhancer of cognitive function in healthy aging – A systematic review and meta-analysis.” *PLoS ONE* 13(11): e207957. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0207957>

Worschech, F., Marie, D., Sinke, C., Kliegel, M., Jünemann, K., Scholz, D. S., Krüger, T. H., James, C.E., & Altenmüller, E. (2025). “Quality of life in older adults is enhanced by piano practice”: Results from a randomized controlled trial. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.15397>

**A collection of articles from Science Daily that may be of interest:**

[Music may bring health benefits for older adults, poll suggests](#), February 7, 2024

[Playing an instrument linked to better brain health in older adults](#), January 29, 2024

[How music can prevent cognitive decline](#), April 17, 2023

[Just a few years of early musical training benefits the brain later in life](#), November 5, 2013