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Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders

Postural Control Deficits in Autism Spectrum Disorder: The Role of Sensory Integration

Abstract
We investigated the nature of sensory integration deficits in postural control of young adults with ASD. Postural control was assessed in a fixed environment, and in three environments in which sensory information about body sway from visual, proprioceptive or both channels was inaccurate. Furthermore, two levels of inaccurate information were used within each channel (gain 1 and 1.6). ASD participants showed greater postural sway when information from both channels was inaccurate. In addition, control participants’ ellipse area at gain 1.6 was identical to ASD participants’ at gain 1, reflecting hyper-reactivity in ASD. Our results provide evidence for hyper-reactivity in posture-related sensory information, which reflects a general, rather than channel-specific sensory integration impairment in ASD.