

# The Journal of Physiological Sciences

## Inaudible components of the human infant cry influence hemodynamic responses in the breast region of mothers --Manuscript Draft--

<b>Manuscript Number:</b>	JPSC-D-19-00204R2	
<b>Full Title:</b>	Inaudible components of the human infant cry influence hemodynamic responses in the breast region of mothers	
<b>Article Type:</b>	Original Paper	
<b>Corresponding Author:</b>	Kazuyuki Shinohara Nagasaki Daigaku JAPAN	
<b>Corresponding Author Secondary Information:</b>		
<b>Corresponding Author's Institution:</b>	Nagasaki Daigaku	
<b>Corresponding Author's Secondary Institution:</b>		
<b>First Author:</b>	Hirokazu Doi	
<b>First Author Secondary Information:</b>		
<b>Order of Authors:</b>	Hirokazu Doi	
	Simone Sulpizio	
	Gianluca Esposito	
	Masahiro Katou	
	Emi Nishina	
	Mayuko Iriguchi	
	Manabu Honda	
	Tsutomu Oohashi	
	Marc H. Bornstein	
	Kazuyuki Shinohara	
<b>Order of Authors Secondary Information:</b>		
<b>Funding Information:</b>	the European Research Council (ERC) under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 695300-HKADeCERC- 2015-AdG))	Not applicable
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>Distress vocalizations are fundamental for survival, and both sonic and ultrasonic components of such vocalizations are preserved phylogenetically among many mammals. On this basis, we hypothesized that ultrasonic inaudible components of the acoustic signal might play a heretofore hidden role in humans as well. By investigating the human distress vocalization (infant cry), here we show that, similar to other species, the human infant cry contains ultrasonic components that modulate hemodynamic responses in mothers, without the mother being consciously aware of those modulations. In two studies, we measured the hemodynamic activity in the breasts of mothers while they were exposed to the ultrasonic components of infant cries. Although mothers were not aware of ultrasounds, the presence of the ultrasounds in combination with the audible components increased oxygenated hemoglobin concentration in the mothers' breast region. This modulation was observed only when the body surface was exposed to the ultrasonic components. These findings provide the first evidence indicating that the ultrasonic components of the acoustic signal play a role in human mother-infant interaction.</p>	

**Response to Reviewers:**

Thank you for giving us a great chance for revision. We appreciate your comments, and the revision of our manuscript is completed according to your comments. Please find a response letter with our review points.  
We thank you for your consideration and all work for our manuscript. We look forward to receiving your decision.

In the following, we summarized our responses to the comments made by the reviewers.

The corrected portions are highlighted in red in the revised manuscript. The page numbers correspond to those in the upper right corner of the manuscript.

### **Responses to Comments by Reviewer #1**

**Comment 1:** No further comments.

**Response:** Thank you for your cooperation in improving our paper.

### **Responses to Comments by Reviewer #2**

**Comment 1:** Although the authors used 13 time-windows data for overall analysis (Table 1, 4, and 6), averaged pre-stimulation data (+1 time-window) or three pre-stimulation data (+3 time-windows) should be added together with the 13 time-windows data.

**Response:** Following your recommendation, we included three pre-stimulation windows in the three-way ANOVA. The results remain unchanged; As in the original analysis, there was significant time x cry type interaction in oxyHb in Experiment 1, which originates from significant conditional difference during stimulation period. We made necessary modifications to the description of ANOVA designs and the statistical values in the body text as well as Tables.

Table 1, 4, 5, 6 summarize results of 2-way ANOVA on oxyHd/deoxyHb averaged during the stimulation period. OxyHb/deoxyHb in the three pre-stimulation windows were entered into 3-way ANOVA with channel (2) x cry type (3) x time-

window (16), whose results are described only in the body text. If you think it necessary to summarize the results of 3-way ANOVA in tables, we're willing to comply.

1  
2  
3 **1 RUNNING HEAD: ULTRASONIC CRY**

4  
5 2  
6  
7 3 **Title:** Inaudible components of the human infant cry influence hemodynamic responses  
8  
9  
10 4 in the breast region of mothers.

11 5  
12  
13 6 **Authors:** Hirokazu Doi<sup>a\*</sup>, Simone Sulpizio<sup>b, c\*</sup>, Gianluca Esposito<sup>d, e</sup>, Masahiro Katou<sup>f</sup>,  
14  
15  
16  
17 7 Emi Nishina<sup>g</sup>, Mayuko Iriguchi<sup>a</sup>, Manabu, Honda<sup>h</sup>, Tsutomu Oohashi<sup>i</sup>, Marc H.  
18  
19 8 Bornstein<sup>j</sup>, and Kazuyuki Shinohara<sup>a</sup>

20  
21  
22 9 \*These authors equally contributed to the present study.  
23  
24  
25 10

26  
27 11 **Affiliations:**

28  
29 12 <sup>a</sup>Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, Nagasaki University Graduate School  
30  
31  
32 13 of Biomedical Sciences, Japan;

33  
34 14 <sup>b</sup>Faculty of Psychology, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Italy;

35  
36  
37 15 <sup>c</sup>Centre for Neurolinguistics and Psycholinguistics, Vita-Salute San Raffaele  
38  
39 16 University, Italy;

40  
41 17 <sup>d</sup> Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Trento, Italy;

42  
43  
44 18 <sup>e</sup> Psychology Program, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore;

45  
46 19 <sup>f</sup>Kato Acoustics Consulting Office;

47  
48  
49 20 <sup>g</sup>Department of Liberal Arts, The Open University of Japan, Japan;

50  
51 21 <sup>h</sup>Department of Functional Brain Research, National Center of Neurology and  
52  
53  
54 22 Psychiatry, Japan;

55  
56 23 <sup>i</sup>Department of Research and Development, Foundation for Advancement of  
57  
58  
59 24 International Science, Japan;

1  
2  
3 25 <sup>j</sup>*Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development,  
4  
5 26 USA, Institute for Fiscal Studies, London, UK  
6  
7  
8 27  
9

10 28 **Corresponding Author:** Kazuyuki Shinohara  
11

12 29 **Affiliation:** Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Nagasaki University  
13

14 30 **Address:** 1-12-4 Sakamoto-cho, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki, Japan, 852-8523  
15

16 31 **e-mail (contact address):** [shinokazu0403@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:shinokazu0403@yahoo.co.jp)  
17  
18

19 32 **TEL:** [+81-95-819-7035](tel:+81-95-819-7035)  
20  
21

22 33 **FAX:** +81-95-819-7036  
23  
24

25 34

### 26 35 **Ethics**

27 36 The experimental protocol was approved by the ethical committee of Nagasaki  
28  
29

30 37 University (No. 08102894-5). The participants were given information about the  
31  
32

33 38 research and gave written informed consent.  
34  
35  
36

37 39

### 38 40 **Competing Interests**

39 41 We declare no conflict of interest.  
40  
41  
42

43 42

### 44 43 **Funding**

45 44 This research was supported by the Intramural Research Program of the  
46  
47

48 45 NIH/NICHD, USA, and an International Research Fellowship at the Institute for Fiscal  
49  
50

51 46 Studies (IFS), London, UK, funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the  
52  
53

54 47 Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 695300-  
55  
56

57 48 HKADeCERC- 2015-AdG). This study was partly supported by Grant-in-Aid for  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 49 Scientific Research on Innovative Areas (Chronogenesis: how the mind generates time;

4  
5 50 Grant No. 19H05315) to HD.

6  
7  
8 51

9  
10 52 **Acknowledgments**

11  
12 53 We thank Wakako Horita and Eriko Yamada for their help in participant recruitment

13  
14  
15 54 and data collection. Without their help, this study would have been impossible. Yuichiro

16  
17 55 Kikuno also assisted participant recruitment. We also thank Paola Rigo and Tommaso

18  
19  
20 56 Sega for their help with editing figures.

21  
22 57

23  
24  
25 58

26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 59 **Abstract**  
4

5 60 Distress vocalizations are fundamental for survival, and both sonic and ultrasonic  
6  
7 61 components of such vocalizations are preserved phylogenetically among many  
8  
9  
10 62 mammals. On this basis, we hypothesized that ultrasonic inaudible components of the  
11  
12 63 acoustic signal might play a heretofore hidden role in humans as well. By investigating  
13  
14 64 the human distress vocalization (infant cry), here we show that, similar to other species,  
15  
16 65 the human infant cry contains ultrasonic components that modulate hemodynamic  
17  
18 66 responses in mothers, without the mother being consciously aware of those  
19  
20 67 modulations. In two studies, we measured the hemodynamic activity in the breasts of  
21  
22 68 mothers while they were exposed to the ultrasonic components of infant cries. Although  
23  
24 69 mothers were not aware of ultrasounds, the presence of the ultrasounds in combination  
25  
26 70 with the audible components increased oxygenated hemoglobin concentration in the  
27  
28 71 mothers' breast region. This modulation was observed only when the body surface was  
29  
30 72 exposed to the ultrasonic components. These findings provide the first evidence  
31  
32 73 indicating that the ultrasonic components of the acoustic signal play a role in human  
33  
34 74 mother-infant interaction.  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43

44 76 **Keywords:** Parenting, Cry, Mother, Infant, Ultrasonic  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65



1  
2  
3 78 The cry *qua* distress vocalization is fundamental for survival and is preserved  
4  
5 79 phylogenetically among many mammals (Bass, Gilland & Baker, 2008; Doi &  
6  
7 80 Shinohara, 2012). The vocalizations emitted by infants are acoustically similar across a  
8  
9 81 wide array of taxonomic families (Lingle et al., 2012). Moreover, parental behaviour is  
10  
11 82 governed by many phylogenetically preserved principles that are conserved from  
12  
13 83 rodents to humans (Rilling & Young, 2014). Determining the acoustic constituents of  
14  
15 84 the cry and their functions are at the core of understanding human mother-infant  
16  
17 85 interaction because of the signal role of the cry in mammalian caregiving.  
18  
19  
20  
21

22 86 In mammals other than humans, such as rodents, cats, and primates (Ehret,  
23  
24 87 1987; Sewell, 1970; Sales, 2010; Cherry, Izard, & Simons, 1987), high-frequency  
25  
26 88 components in cry sounds (>20 kHz) are emitted by young offspring to signal distress  
27  
28 89 (Zimmerberg, Brunelli, & Fluty, 2005) due to hunger, physical discomfort, isolation, or  
29  
30 90 capture by predators. These vocalizations elicit strong physiological and behavioural  
31  
32 91 responses in caregivers. Considering that humans share similar neural circuits for  
33  
34 92 processing infant cries with other mammalian species (Bornstein et al, 2017; Laurent,  
35  
36 93 Stevens & Ablow, 2011), it seems plausible to hypothesize that humans also possess the  
37  
38 94 neural machinery to process the ultrasonic cry sounds of infants (Newman, 2007).  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43

44 95 To date, the cry sounds of human infants have been thought to contain only  
45  
46 96 audible frequencies, with an average fundamental frequency of 300-600 Hz (Kent &  
47  
48 97 Murray, 1982). Here we ascertained that human infant cries contain ultrasonic  
49  
50 98 components with frequencies (in some cases) exceeding 80 kHz (see Figure 1) by using  
51  
52 99 a purpose-made apparatus that allowed us to record and reproduce sounds with audible  
53  
54 100 (<20 kHz) and ultrasonic (>20 kHz) components. Inspired by this initial observation, we  
55  
56 101 then investigated the functional value of ultrasonic sounds in infant' cry sounds.  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

102

103

\*\*\*\*\*Inset Figure 1 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

104

105

Breastfeeding is a defining mammalian maternal behaviour (Kim et al, 2011). It

106

has been demonstrated that infants in a state of hunger emit cry sounds with particular

107

acoustic characteristics that prompt breastfeeding (Lingle et al, 2012). Of particular

108

relevance to the present study, Vuorenkoski and colleagues (1969) reported that

109

exposure to the cry sounds of an infant induces an increase in the temperature of the

110

mother's breast region. Skin temperature rise in the breast region related to

111

breastfeeding has been observed in other studies (Kimura & Matsuoka, 2007; van der

112

Hoek et al, 2019) and is generally attributed to increased blood influx induced by

113

oxytocin secretion (van der Hoek et al, 2019), partly because there is a close linkage

114

between thermal regulation and blood circulation (Johnson & Kellogg, 2010; Taylor,

115

Tipton & Kenny, 2014). Further, exposure to infant cry sound is reported to induce

116

increases in heart rate (Joosen et al, 2012; Out et al, 2010). On the basis of these

117

observations, we decided to assay the potency of the ultrasonic components of cry

118

sounds to modulate hemodynamic responses in the breast region.

119

Experiment 1 was designed to elucidate the nature of the ultrasonic effect of

120

the infant cry by, first, determining whether ultrasonic components of a typical infant

121

cry influenced the hemodynamic response in mothers and, second, by determining

122

whether ultrasonic components of the cry alone would be sufficient to induce a

123

hemodynamic response in mothers. We measured hemodynamic responses in the breast

124

region of mothers in response to three types of cry sounds: natural cries, scrambled

125

cries, and ultrasonic only cries. Both natural cries and scrambled cries contained audible

1  
2  
3 126 and inaudible components, but the frequency structure of the inaudible components was  
4  
5 127 disrupted in the scrambled cries. Because the audible components were left intact in the  
6  
7 128 scrambled cries as well as in natural cries, these two types of cries sounded the same.  
8  
9  
10 129 Ultrasonic only cries contained only the inaudible components of the cry sound.  
11

12  
13 130 Hemodynamic activity in the mothers' breasts was recorded through dual-  
14  
15 131 channel near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS), with two sensors attached directly to the  
16  
17 132 skin surface of the right and left breasts. Analyses focused on the concentration of  
18  
19 133 oxygenated and deoxygenated hemoglobin (oxyHb/deoxyHb) during the presentation of  
20  
21 134 the cries. OxyHb/deoxyHb measurement is a sensitive indicator of a change in breast  
22  
23 135 blood flow (Tanimoto et al, 2011). The comparison between hemodynamic responses to  
24  
25 136 natural and scrambled cries supposedly reveals effects, if any, of the ultrasonic  
26  
27 137 components in infant cry sounds. We included ultrasonic only cries as sound stimuli to  
28  
29 138 ascertain whether the ultrasonic cry sounds alone would induce hemodynamic responses  
30  
31 139 in mothers.  
32  
33  
34  
35

36  
37 140 In their seminal study on the effects of ultrasonic sounds on humans, Oohashi  
38  
39 141 and colleagues (2006) claimed that the effects of ultrasonic components of sounds on  
40  
41 142 neural and behavioural responses ("hypersonic effect") are observed only when the  
42  
43 143 listener's entire body is exposed to the ultrasonic sounds, indicating a reliance of the  
44  
45 144 "hypersonic effect" on systems other than, or in addition to, the auditory system. Thus,  
46  
47 145 it is possible that, if there are any modulatory influences of ultrasonic components of the  
48  
49 146 infant cry on the hemodynamics of the mother's breast, they may be mediated by a  
50  
51 147 mechanism similar to that proposed by Oohashi and colleagues (2006).  
52  
53  
54  
55

56 148 To investigate this possibility, we conducted a second experiment, in which  
57  
58 149 mothers were exposed to the same set of cry sounds used in experiment 1, but through  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 150 headphones that conveyed ultrasonic as well as audible components of the sounds. If the  
4  
5 151 perceptual system outside the inner ear plays a pivotal role in the induction of the  
6  
7 152 ultrasonic effects of the infant cry, an effect of ultrasonic cry sounds similar to that  
8  
9 153 observed in experiment 1 should not be observed in experiment 2, because the mothers'  
10  
11  
12 154 bodily surface is not exposed to the cry sounds.  
13  
14  
15 155

## 16 156 **2. Experiment 1**

### 17 157 **2-1. Methods**

#### 18 158 *2-1-1. Participants*

19  
20 159           Seventeen healthy mothers (M age = 32. 3 years, SD = 4.5) took part (babies'  
21  
22 160 M age = 5.3 months; SD = 2.1) after giving written informed consent.  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30 161

#### 31 162 *2-1-2. Materials and Stimuli*

32  
33  
34 163           The original cry sounds used for the creation of the experimental stimuli in  
35  
36 164 experiment 1 and experiment 2 were chosen from a database of infant cries. We used  
37  
38 165 spontaneous infant cries recorded from four different infants (aged 4-10 months). All  
39  
40 166 infants were born at term and showed no signs of clinical conditions at birth or at the  
41  
42 167 time of recording. Cries were recorded at least 2 hours after the most recent  
43  
44 168 breastfeeding to collect recordings of one bout of hunger cry from each infant.  
45  
46 169 Recordings were performed using a free-field microphone (40BE; G.R.A.S Sound &  
47  
48 170 Vibration, Vedbaek, Denmark), a microphone preamplifier (26CB; G.R.A.S. Sound &  
49  
50 171 Vibration, Vedbaek, Denmark), and a dual-channel sensor amplifier (SR-2200; Ono  
51  
52 172 Sokki, Tokyo, Japan). The signals were digitized by a signal processor (0202 USB 2.0  
53  
54 173 Audio Interface; E-MU Systems, Scotts Valley, California, U.S.), with an A/D sampling  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 174 frequency of 192 kHz, and stored on a PC. The microphone was situated at a constant  
4  
5 175 distance of 15 cm from the infants' mouth, and the total duration of the infants' crying  
6  
7 176 was recorded.

8  
9  
10 177 Recorded sounds of cries originally differed in length, with two cries having  
11  
12 178 short recording lengths (1.35 and 2.07 sec) and two having longer recording lengths  
13  
14 179 (21.97 and 20.5 sec). To create cry segments of equal duration and of a reasonable  
15  
16  
17 180 length to elicit an ultrasonic effect (Oohashi et al, 2000), four sound files of cries of 45  
18  
19 181 sec were made by duplicating and concatenating the original cry recordings.

20  
21  
22 182 In experiment 1, four different natural cries (original recordings of cry sounds,  
23  
24 183 containing both audible and intact ultrasonic components, produced by four different  
25  
26 184 babies) were used. Two further versions of each cry were created: one with a scrambled  
27  
28  
29 185 ultrasonic component (scrambled cries) and one containing only the ultrasonic cry  
30  
31 186 components (ultrasonic only cries). To create the scrambled cries, we first isolated the  
32  
33 187 ultrasonic components of each cry by applying a high-pass filter to the sound using a  
34  
35  
36 188 22-kHz cut-off frequency. The waveforms above the cut-off frequency were divided into  
37  
38  
39 189 20 ms segments. Each ultrasonic waveform segment was Fourier-transformed, its phase  
40  
41 190 values within frequency domain being shuffled, and then inverse Fourier-transformed to  
42  
43 191 yield scrambled waveform segments. Then, scrambled ultrasonic components were  
44  
45  
46 192 created by concatenating these scrambled waveform segments in the original order  
47  
48  
49 193 (Belin, Zatorre & Ahad, 2002). Finally, after adjusting the RMS of the sound pressure of  
50  
51 194 scrambled ultrasonic components with that of corresponding natural cry, we spliced the  
52  
53 195 scrambled ultrasonic components onto the audible components of the cry to synthesize  
54  
55  
56 196 the scrambled cries.

57  
58 197 Ultrasonic only cries were created using high-pass filtering of each of the  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 198 natural cries with a cut-off frequency of 22 kHz. In contrast to the natural cries and  
4  
5 199 scrambled cries, the ultrasonic only cries did not contain audible components and were  
6  
7 200 inaudible to participants. Spectrograms of example sounds in each condition are shown  
8  
9 201 in Figure 2. The averaged sound pressure levels of each type of sound against  
10  
11 202 background noise were  $56.9 \pm 4.47$  dB for natural cry,  $57.0 \pm 4.43$  dB for scrambled cry,  
12  
13 203 and  $30.3 \pm 2.24$  dB for ultrasonic only cry.  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18

19  
20 205 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Figure 2 About Here\*\*\*\*\*  
21

22 206  
23

### 24 207 *2-1-3. Apparatus and Procedures*

25  
26  
27 208 Each participant engaged in fNIRS measurement and a detection task that  
28  
29 209 aimed to verify the validity of experimental manipulation. The detection task was  
30  
31 210 conducted after the completion of the fNIRS measurement.  
32  
33

34 211  
35

#### 36 212 *2-1-3-1. fNIRS measurement*

37  
38  
39 213 Stimuli were presented through a 192-kHz high-resolution audio system, which  
40  
41 214 allowed us to control stimulus presentation and play the ultrasonic components and  
42  
43 215 audible components of cries through a speaker and a super tweeter. Specifically, we  
44  
45 216 used a system designed with a 2-way monitor speaker (RL906; musikelectronic githain  
46  
47 217 gmbh, Germany) for the presentation of audible range components and a custom-made  
48  
49 218 super tweeter (Trb-001-ngs; Katou Acoustics Consultant Office, Japan) with frequency  
50  
51 219 response 20-96 kHz for the presentation of inaudible high-frequency range components.  
52  
53 220 The two speakers were positioned in front of the participant at a distance of  
54  
55 221 approximately 50 cm, as shown in Figure 3. We presented the cry sounds through the  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 222 simultaneous presentation of low frequencies and high frequencies. Sounds within  
4  
5 223 audible and ultrasonic frequency ranges were presented through speaker and super  
6  
7 224 tweeter, respectively.  
8  
9

10 225

11  
12 226 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Figure 3 About Here\*\*\*\*\*  
13

14 227

15  
16  
17 228 For fNIRS measurement, we measured the oxyHb and deoxyHb in participants'  
18  
19 229 breast region using a dual-channel NIRS (NIRO-220, Shimadzu. Co.) during the  
20  
21 230 presentation of the three types of cries. fNIRS emitters and probes were attached to the  
22  
23 231 upper inner quadrant of both breasts (Tanimoto et al, 2011), as shown in Figure 3. To  
24  
25 232 attach the emitters and probes, a rubber probe holder (approximately 60 × 30 mm) was  
26  
27 233 affixed to the breast. The modified Lambert–Beer law was used to calculate the oxyHb  
28  
29 234 and deoxyHb. The sampling rate was 1 Hz.  
30  
31

32  
33 235 Participants sat in front of a 19 inch computer screen and speakers and  
34  
35 236 passively listened to the cries. The temporal sequence of stimulus presentation was as  
36  
37 237 follows. A white fixation cross subtending approximately 1.8 deg in height and 1.8 deg  
38  
39 238 in width was displayed against black background at the centre of the screen for 15 sec to  
40  
41 239 serve as the baseline. The cry stimulus was then presented for 45 sec. Simultaneously  
42  
43 240 with the onset of cry stimulus, the colour of the fixation cross changed from white to  
44  
45 241 red. The colour change of fixation cross was incorporated into the experimental design  
46  
47 242 so that participants noticed the start of stimulus presentation even when only inaudible  
48  
49 243 sounds were being played in the ultrasonic only condition. At the end of cry stimulus,  
50  
51 244 the fixation colour changed back to white, and there was a 20-sec post-stimulation  
52  
53 245 period during which a white fixation cross was presented at the centre of the screen.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 246 Trials were separated by 5-sec inter-trial intervals during which the screen was blank  
4  
5 247 (only black background was presented). Before starting the experiment, participants  
6  
7 248 received verbal instructions from the experimenter and were asked to minimize their  
8  
9 249 bodily movements. Three types of experimental blocks were created, one for the  
10  
11 250 presentation of the natural cries, one for the presentation of scrambled cries, and one for  
12  
13 251 the presentation of ultrasonic only cries. Each type of experimental block was presented  
14  
15 252 twice, resulting in a total of 6 blocks. The order of the presentation of the four sound  
16  
17 253 files of each type of cries was randomized within each block, and the block order was  
18  
19 254 pseudo-randomly determined across participants. The entire session lasted for  
20  
21 255 approximately 45 min.  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

27 256

#### 28 29 257 2-1-3-2. Detection Task

30  
31  
32 258 At the start of each trial, a white fixation cross subtending approximately 1.8  
33  
34 259 deg in height and 1.8 deg in width appeared on the screen. One sec after the appearance  
35  
36 260 of the fixation cross, a short (3 sec) excerpt of a cry sound was presented. The  
37  
38 261 participant's task was to press the "1" key with her right index finger as soon as she  
39  
40 262 heard a sound. When the participant pressed a key, the sound presentation was  
41  
42 263 terminated and the experiment proceeded to the next trial. If the participant did not press  
43  
44 264 the key, the sound file played for 3 sec and the experiment automatically proceeded to  
45  
46 265 the next trial. The white fixation cross remained on the screen while the sound was  
47  
48 266 played, and there was no inter-trial interval. Thus, the fixation cross was presented  
49  
50 267 throughout the task. The short excerpts of the four sound files that were used in each  
51  
52 268 condition (natural cries, scrambled cries, ultrasonic only cries) of the fNIRS  
53  
54 269 measurement were each presented twice in a pseudo-random order.  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65



1  
2  
3 2704  
5 271 *2-1-4. Data Analysis*  
6

7 272 In the analysis, oxyHb waveforms were smoothed with a 5-point moving  
8  
9  
10 273 average procedure and linearly detrended, and the oxyHb value in each temporal point  
11  
12 274 was transformed into standardized oxyHb. The standardized oxyHb was computed as  
13  
14  
15 275 follows. First, the mean of the oxyHb values during the 15-sec baseline period was  
16  
17 276 subtracted from the oxyHb. Then, the oxyHb value was divided by the standard  
18  
19 277 deviation of the oxyHb values obtained during the baseline period. Thereafter, the  
20  
21  
22 278 waveforms of the standardized oxyHb in all of the trials of the same condition were  
23  
24 279 averaged to generate the waveforms of standardized oxyHb for each participant in each  
25  
26  
27 280 condition. Standardized deoxyHb waveforms were computed for each participant in the  
28  
29 281 same manner. Due to the high peak sound pressure in the original recordings, there were  
30  
31  
32 282 segments with signal overflow in some of the sound files, which introduces the  
33  
34 283 possibility of clipping in some segments of stimulus sounds. However, we used data of  
35  
36  
37 284 all the eligible trials in the final analysis to increase the signal-to-noise ratio.

38  
39 285 In the first set of statistical analyses, the average of the standardized  
40  
41 286 oxyHb/deoxyHb during the whole 45-sec stimulation period was used as the dependent  
42  
43  
44 287 variable. OxyHb/deoxyHb were then analysed by a two-way analysis of variance  
45  
46 288 (ANOVA) with the type of cry (natural cries vs scrambled cries vs ultrasonic only cries)  
47  
48  
49 289 and the channel side (left vs. right) as within-participant factors.

50  
51 290 The measured waveforms of oxyHb/deoxyHb in each condition showed clear  
52  
53  
54 291 temporal fluctuation. Thus, in the second set of analyses, we examined the temporal  
55  
56 292 course of the influences of cry type on hemodynamic response. To achieve this, **baseline**  
57  
58 293 **period, stimulation period and post-stimulation period were** segmented into 5-sec time-

1  
2  
3 294 windows. Then, oxyHb/deoxyHb in each condition was averaged within each time-  
4  
5 295 window. This resulted in total of 3 cry types x 2 channel sides x 16 time-windows (3  
6  
7 296 time-windows during 15-secs baseline, 9 time-windows during 45-sec cry stimulus  
8  
9 297 presentation and 4 time-windows during 20-sec post-stimulation period) = 96 values for  
10  
11  
12 298 oxyHb and deoxyHb each. We decided to include the post-stimulation period in this  
13  
14 299 analysis because several fNIRS studies have reported lasting influence of sensory  
15  
16 300 stimulation on cortical hemodynamic responses after the end of stimulus presentation  
17  
18 301 (Doi, Nishitani & Shinohara, 2013 for a brief review). OxyHb/deoxyHb were then  
19  
20 302 analysed by a three-way ANOVA with the channel side (2), time-window (16), and the  
21  
22 303 type of cry (3) as within-participant factors.  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27 304

## 29 305 **2-2. Results**

30  
31  
32 306 The temporal course of oxyHb in each condition is shown in Figure 4-a. A 2 x  
33  
34 307 3 ANOVA with oxyHb as the dependent variable showed a main effect of the type of cry  
35  
36 308 ( $F(2, 32) = 6.47, p = 0.004, \eta_p^2 = 0.29$ ). The ANOVA table is presented in Table 1.  
37  
38  
39 309

40  
41 310 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Figure 4 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

42  
43 311 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 1 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

44  
45  
46 312  
47  
48  
49 313 Multiple comparisons by Holm's Sequentially Rejective Bonferroni's method  
50  
51 314 revealed a higher level of oxyHb on presentation of natural cries than on presentation of  
52  
53 315 scrambled cries ( $t(16) = 3.06, \text{adjusted } p = 0.022$ ) and ultrasonic only cries ( $t(16) =$   
54  
55 316  $2.70, \text{adjusted } p = 0.031$ ); responses to the scrambled cries and ultrasonic only cries did  
56  
57 317 not differ from each other ( $t(16) = 0.27, \text{adjusted } p = 0.78$ ). No effect of channel side  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 318 was observed, and no interaction between the channel side and the type of cry emerged  
4  
5 319 ( $F_s < 2, p_s > 0.20$ ).

6  
7 320 **A 2 x 16 x 3 ANOVA** with oxyHb as the dependent variable revealed a  
8  
9  
10 321 significant main effect of the type of cry ( $F(2, 32) = 6.39, p = .0046, \eta_p^2 = 0.29$ ). This  
11  
12 322 main effect was qualified by a significant two-way interaction between time-window  
13  
14 323 and the type of cry ( $F(30, 480) = 2.22, p = .0003, \eta_p^2 = 0.12$ ). No other effect reached  
15  
16 324 significance ( $F_s < 1.3, p_s > .14$ ).

17  
18  
19 325 Simple main effect analysis revealed a significant simple main effect of the  
20  
21 326 type of cry in **seventh to eleventh time-windows** that roughly correspond to the latter  
22  
23 327 half of stimulus presentation period as summarized in Table 2. Pairwise comparisons by  
24  
25 328 Holm's Sequentially Rejective Bonferroni's method were carried out in each time-  
26  
27 329 window. The results of pairwise comparisons are summarized in Table 3. As can be  
28  
29 330 seen, oxyHb in response to natural cry sounds was higher than both scrambled and  
30  
31 331 ultrasonic only cries in **the eighth time-window** around the apex of oxyHb fluctuation,  
32  
33 332 but the conditional difference was less clear in the other time-windows.

34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39 333

40  
41 334 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 2 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

42  
43 335 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 3 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

44  
45  
46  
47 336

48  
49 337 The temporal course of deoxyHb in each condition is shown in Figure 4-b. A 3  
50  
51 338 x 2 ANOVA with deoxyHb as the dependent variable revealed no significant effects ( $F_s$   
52  
53 339  $< 2.4, p_s > 0.10$ ). The ANOVA results are summarized in Table 4.

54  
55  
56  
57 340

58  
59 341 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 4 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 342  
4  
5 343 A 2 x 16 x 3 ANOVA with deoxyHb as the dependent variable revealed a  
6  
7 344 marginally significant main effect of the type of cry ( $F(2, 32) = 2.70, p = .082, \eta_p^2 =$   
8  
9 345  $0.14$ ); deoxyHb tended to decrease most prominently in the natural cry condition. This  
10  
11 346 main effect was qualified by a significant two-way interaction between time-window  
12  
13 347 and the type of cry ( $F(30, 480) = 2.03, p = .012, \eta_p^2 = 0.11$ ). No other effect reached or  
14  
15 348 approached significance ( $F_s < 1.5, p_s > .25$ ). Simple main effect analysis revealed a  
16  
17 349 significant simple main effect of the type of cry in the fourteenth time-window during  
18  
19 350 the post-stimulation period ( $F(2, 32) = 5.14, p = .012, \eta_p^2 = 0.24$ ). Pairwise-  
20  
21 351 comparisons revealed significantly higher deoxyHb to the scrambled than natural cry ( $t$   
22  
23 352  $(16) = 2.98, adjusted p = .03$ ). No other pairwise comparisons reached significance after  
24  
25 353 adjustment ( $t_s < 1.75, adjusted p_s > .20$ ). Simple main effect of the type of cry failed to  
26  
27 354 reach significance in the other time-windows ( $F_s < 2.8, p_s > .10$ ).  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33

34 355 In the detection task, participants pressed the key every time they were exposed  
35  
36 356 to sound excerpts of natural cries or scrambled cries (100%). Participants almost never  
37  
38 357 pressed the key on the presentation of the ultrasonic only cries (< 1.5 %).  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43

### 44 359 3. Experiment 2

#### 45 360 3-1. Methods

##### 46 361 3-1-1. Participants

47 362 Seventeen healthy mothers (M age = 32.7 years, SD = 3.0) took part in  
48  
49 363 experiment 2 (babies' M age = 5.1 months; SD = 1.1). All participants in the present  
50  
51 364 study provided written informed consent.  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 366 *3-1-2. Stimuli and Procedure*

4  
5 367 The same set of cries that were used in experiment 1 (natural cries, scrambled  
6  
7 368 cries, and ultrasonic only cries) were played through headphones (EAH-T700,  
8  
9  
10 369 Panasonic Co, Japan) with response frequency 3Hz-100kHz using a custom-made  
11  
12 370 headphone amplifier. To equate the frequency responses of the sounds in experiment 1  
13  
14  
15 371 and 2, we manipulated the sound files using an equalizer function in Audacity version  
16  
17 372 2.1.3 (Audacity Team). Except for the use of headphones and modification of frequency  
18  
19  
20 373 responses of cry sounds, the apparatus, stimulus, and procedures of both the fNIRS  
21  
22 374 measurement and the detection task were exactly the same as in experiment 1.  
23  
24  
25 375

26  
27 376 **3-2. Results**

28  
29 377 The temporal course of the standardized oxyHb in each condition is shown in  
30  
31  
32 378 Figure 5-a. A 2 x 3 ANOVA with oxyHb as the dependent variable revealed no  
33  
34 379 significant effects ( $F_s < 0.88$ ,  $p_s > 0.4$ ). The detailed results of the ANOVA are  
35  
36  
37 380 summarized in Table 5. **A 2 x 16 x 3 ANOVA revealed no significant effects either ( $F_s <$**   
38  
39 381 **1.4,  $p_s > .10$ ).**

40  
41 382

42  
43  
44 383 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Figure 5 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

45  
46 384 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 5 About Here\*\*\*\*\*

47  
48  
49 385

50  
51 386 The temporal course of deoxyHb in each condition is shown in Figure 5-b. A 3  
52  
53  
54 387 x 2 ANOVA, with deoxyHb as the dependent variable, using the same factorial design  
55  
56 388 as described above revealed no significant effects (all  $F_s < 0.8$ ,  $p_s > 0.4$ ). The ANOVA  
57  
58  
59 389 table is presented in Table 6. **A 2 x 16 x 3 ANOVA** revealed a significant main effect of

60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 390 time-window ( $F(15, 240) = 3.72, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = 0.19$ ). No other effect reached  
4  
5 391 significance ( $F_s < 1.3, p_s > .13$ ).  
6

7  
8 392

9  
10 393 \*\*\*\*\*Insert Table 6 About Here\*\*\*\*\*  
11

12  
13 394

14  
15 395 As in experiment 1, the detection task demonstrated that the participants did  
16  
17 396 not consciously perceive the ultrasonic only sound (no participants pressed the button  
18  
19 397 during the presentation of the ultrasonic only cries). Experiment 2 did not show an  
20  
21 398 effect of the ultrasonic sounds on maternal hemodynamic responses at the breast. The  
22  
23 399 small effect size, described in Table 5 and Table 6, indicates that the inner ear does not  
24  
25 400 play a major role in the induction of the ultrasonic effects of hemodynamic responses in  
26  
27 401 the mothers' breasts.  
28  
29  
30

31  
32 402

#### 33 34 403 **4. Discussion**

35  
36 404 The present study revealed that human infant cries contain ultrasonic  
37  
38 405 components, and, together, the results of two experiments demonstrate that the  
39  
40 406 ultrasonic components of the infant cry influence hemodynamic activity in the breasts  
41  
42 407 of mothers. Specifically, the concentration of oxyHb in the breast region increased in  
43  
44 408 response to infant cry sounds with intact ultrasonic components. Concomitantly,  
45  
46 409 deoxyHb showed trend-level fluctuation in the direction opposite to oxyHb, which is  
47  
48 410 considered to be a reliable sign of oxygen-rich arterial blood influx (Doi, Nishitani &  
49  
50 411 Shinohara, 2013; Minagawa-Kawai, Naoi & Kojima, 2009): Inflow of oxygenated  
51  
52 412 blood into blood vessels replaces deoxyHb and consequently decreases deoxyHb  
53  
54 413 concentration in blood. Oohashi and colleagues (2000) reported brain responses in  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 414 human listeners to ultrasonic components contained in Gamelan music (traditional of  
4  
5 415 Java and Bali in Indonesia), suggesting that “inaudible” high-frequency components  
6  
7 416 (>20 kHz) are processed by human listeners in fully appreciating instrumental music.  
8  
9  
10 417 Our findings agree with their results that the inaudible ultrasound components of the  
11  
12 418 human infant cry can modulate hemodynamic responses in the breast region of mothers.  
13  
14  
15 419 The present study therefore constitutes the first demonstrations that ultrasonic  
16  
17 420 components are present in the human infant cry and that inaudible components of infant  
18  
19  
20 421 vocalizations induce physiological responses in mothers.  
21

22 422 The observed effects of the ultrasonic components in the typical human infant  
23  
24 423 cry share many characteristics with the “hypersonic effect” observed by Oohashi and  
25  
26  
27 424 colleagues (2000, 2006). First, for this effect to emerge, listeners need to be exposed to  
28  
29 425 audible carrier sounds simultaneously with ultrasonic sounds; in other words, no  
30  
31  
32 426 modulatory influence on maternal hemodynamic responses was observed when only  
33  
34 427 ultrasonic components were present. Second, the inner ear does not play a primary role  
35  
36 428 in the induction of this effect. These observations suggest that the ultrasonic effects of  
37  
38  
39 429 the typical infant cry rely on a similar perceptual mechanism as the “hypersonic effect”  
40  
41 430 (Oohashi et al, 2006; Oohashi et al, 2000; Yagi, Nishina, Honda & Oohashi, 2003).  
42

43  
44 431 Ultrasonic communication is common in the mother-infant interaction in a  
45  
46 432 wide variety of mammalian species. The emission of ultrasounds by young offspring is  
47  
48  
49 433 usually prompted by distress of various sorts (Zimmerberg, Brunelli & Fluty, 2005), and  
50  
51 434 in turn it often elicits prompt maternal responses (Marlin et al, 2015; Wöhr &  
52  
53 435 Schwarting, 2008). Distress vocalizations, as well as non-distress vocal communications  
54  
55  
56 436 and calls, are used by mammals and sensitivity to them is attributable to shared neural  
57  
58  
59 437 structures that arose from a common ancestor (Bass, Gilland & Baker, 2008). On the  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 438 basis of this line of reasoning, the present finding may indicate that some parental  
4  
5 439 behaviour is governed by phylogenetically preserved principles that are conserved from  
6  
7 440 rodents to humans (Rilling & Young, 2014). At the same time, there seems to be an  
8  
9 441 important difference in the mechanism to process conspecific's high-frequency  
10  
11 442 vocalizations between humans and the other mammalian species. Researchers generally  
12  
13 443 agree that rodents process conspecific ultrasonic vocalizations in auditory cortex and  
14  
15 444 presumably "hear" them as sounds (Carruthers, Natan & Geffen, 2013; Portfors &  
16  
17 445 Perkel, 2015). By contrast, the present results indicate that human mothers perceive  
18  
19 446 ultrasonic components of infant cries using receptors other than inner ear as discussed  
20  
21 447 above. These results cast doubt on the contention that sensitivity to ultrasonic  
22  
23 448 components in humans is phylogenetically linked to ultrasonic communication in other  
24  
25 449 mammalian species.  
26

27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32 450 Several aspects of the current findings require further explanation. First,  
33  
34 451 auditory components of cry sounds without intact ultrasonic component (scrambled cry)  
35  
36 452 did not exert modulatory effects on hemodynamic responses in breast region in the  
37  
38 453 present study despite the fact that scrambled and natural cries were consciously  
39  
40 454 indistinguishable. This pattern contradicts previous studies that showed strong effects of  
41  
42 455 infant cry sounds on physiological responses in mothers (Crowe & Zeskind, 1992; Groh  
43  
44 456 & Roisman, 2009; Joosen et al, 2012; Out et al, 2010) even when mothers were exposed  
45  
46 457 to cry sounds only within audible range. One explanation for the lack of any effects of  
47  
48 458 audible components in cry sounds in the present study might be the contrast effect  
49  
50 459 (Kingston et al, 2014); when one is exposed to two sensory stimuli successively, the  
51  
52 460 perceived quality of the second stimulus is influenced by the preceding one. In the  
53  
54 461 present study, every participant was exposed to both natural cry sounds with intact  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65



1  
2  
3 462 ultrasonic components and scrambled cry sounds whose ultrasonic components were  
4  
5 463 destroyed in its frequency structure. Considering the previous studies indicating the  
6  
7 464 unconscious effect of inaudible components on behaviour (Yagi, Nishina, Honda &  
8  
9 465 Oohashi, 2003; Yagi, Nishina & Oohashi, 2003) and neural activation (Oohashi et al,  
10  
11 466 2000; Kuribayashi, Yamamoto & Nittono, 2014; Kuribayashi & Nittono, 2017), the  
12  
13 467 neural system may have detected subtle “unnaturalness” in the scrambled sounds due to  
14  
15 468 a contrast effect induced by the presentation of high-fidelity natural cry sounds. This  
16  
17 469 design might have attenuated physiological responses to scrambled sounds in the  
18  
19 470 present study. Though we did not present audible cry sound with no ultrasonic  
20  
21 471 components, it seems likely that cry sounds with only audible components do not have  
22  
23 472 notable effects on hemodynamic responses in mothers due to contrast effect similarly to  
24  
25 473 scrambled sounds in the present study.  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30

31  
32 474 At the same time, if the inner ear does not contribute to the perception of  
33  
34 475 ultrasonic vibration as discussed above, a contrast effect alone would not explain the  
35  
36 476 results of experiment 2. The neural system had no clue to discriminate natural and  
37  
38 477 scrambled cries when the two were played through headphones. Thus, no contrast effect  
39  
40 478 should have emerged in experiment 2. Exposure to infant cry sounds through  
41  
42 479 headphones severely degrades the ecological validity of experimental settings. Such  
43  
44 480 lack of ecological validity might be one cause of our failure to observe any effects of  
45  
46 481 cry sounds, irrespective of the existence of ultrasonic components, on hemodynamic  
47  
48 482 responses in experiment 2. However, this is mere speculation, and further investigation  
49  
50 483 would be required to resolve this issue.  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55

56 484 The second unexpected result was the statistically significant conditional  
57  
58 485 difference in deoxyHb in the post-stimulation period in experiment 1; natural cries  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 486 induced larger decrease in deoxyHb than scrambled cry. As mentioned above, decreases  
4  
5 487 of deoxyHb often accompany oxyHb increases (Doi, Nishitani & Shinohara, 2013;  
6  
7 488 Minagawa-Kawai, Naoi & Kojima, 2009). However, we found no conditional difference  
8  
9  
10 489 in oxyHb fluctuation in post-stimulation period in the present study. At this point, we  
11  
12 490 have no definitive explanation for this unexpected result. Concentration changes of  
13  
14  
15 491 deoxyHb could be influenced by multiple factors, such as cardiac responses and the  
16  
17 492 degree of vasodilation. Furthermore, milk duct expansion as observed in milk ejection is  
18  
19  
20 493 supposed to mechanically compress microvasculature, which sometimes leads to  
21  
22 494 apparent reduction of blood volume and oxyHb/deoxyHb change in the breasts  
23  
24  
25 495 (Tanimoto et al, 2012; van der Hoek et al, 2019; Janbu et al, 1985). Thus, mechanical  
26  
27 496 compression of tissue in breast region induced by prolonged exposure to infant cry  
28  
29  
30 497 sounds might have partly contributed to this unexpected pattern of hemodynamic  
31  
32 498 response after the end of stimulus presentation.

33  
34 499         The average frequencies of linguistic formants are distributed below 10 kHz,  
35  
36  
37 500 which indicates that normal human adult vocal conversation does not rely mainly on the  
38  
39  
40 501 ultrasound components. Why do human infants utilize the ultrasonic channel to signal  
41  
42 502 their distress? One reason may derive from the particular structure of the young human  
43  
44 503 infant's body. Vocal sounds with higher frequencies are usually produced by smaller  
45  
46 504 animals due to the short length of the vocal tract (Lieberman, Harris, Wolff & Russell,  
47  
48  
49 505 1971). This unique anatomical characteristic, *i.e.* a short vocal tract, likely gives rise to  
50  
51 506 infant ultrasounds. The functional significance of ultrasonic component of cry sounds  
52  
53  
54 507 remains unclear at this point. One possibility is that ultrasonic components of the infant  
55  
56 508 cry might prompt oxytocin secretion (Riem et al, 2011). Oxytocin is known to have  
57  
58  
59 509 vasodilatory effect (Japundžić-Žigon , 2013), which conceivably leads to increased  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 510 blood perfusion (van der Hoek et al, 2019; Eriksson, Lundeberg & Uvnäs-Moberg,  
4  
5 511 1996) and temperature rise (Vuorenkoski et al, 1969) in the breasts. Thus, further study  
6  
7 512 is warranted to elucidate the nature of the modulatory effects of the ultrasonic cry on  
8  
9 513 maternal behaviour through the inclusion of endocrinological measurements.  
10  
11

12  
13 514 Another interesting future venue of future research would be to clinical  
14  
15 515 settings. Takahashi and colleagues (Takahashi, Okabe, Broin, Kikusui & Hiroi, 2016)  
16  
17 516 have demonstrated atypical patterns of ultrasonic vocalizations in mice with a rare copy  
18  
19 517 number variant that was identified as risk factor of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).  
20  
21 518 Esposito and Venuti (Esposito & Venuti, 2010) previously identified atypicalities in the  
22  
23 519 cry sounds in human infants who were later diagnosed with ASD. Taking these findings  
24  
25 520 into consideration, our results suggest the possibility that infants with risk factors of  
26  
27 521 ASD might show atypicality in the ultrasonic components of their cry, leading to less  
28  
29 522 optimal maternal responsiveness. Thus, investigation into the functional significance of  
30  
31 523 ultrasonic components in infant cry might play an important role in social cognition  
32  
33 524 research and may be clinically relevant.  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40

## 41 526 **5. Conclusions**

42  
43  
44 527 We present the first evidence of ultrasounds in the human infant cry and  
45  
46 528 demonstrate effects of those ultrasonic components. Even when mothers are unaware of  
47  
48 529 their presence, ultrasonic components of the human infant cry modulate hemodynamic  
49  
50 530 responses in breast region in mothers. Similarly to the observation that some blind  
51  
52 531 individuals utilize mouth-click sounds for echolocation (Thaler et al, 2017), the present  
53  
54 532 findings represent a novel demonstration of the remarkable ability in humans to transmit  
55  
56 533 and recognize abundant information through air vibrations.  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 **534 References**  
4

- 5 535 Bass, A., Gilland, E., Baker, R. (2008). Evolutionary origins for social vocalization in a  
6  
7 536 vertebrate hindbrain spinal compartment. *Science*, 321, 417–421.  
8  
9 537 Belin, P., Zatorre, R., Ahad, P. (2002). Human temporal-lobe response to vocal sounds.  
10  
11 538 *Cognitive Brain Research*, 13(1), 17–26.  
12  
13 539 Bornstein, M.H., Putnick, D.L., Rigo, P., Esposito, G., Swain, J.E., Suwalsky, J.T.D.,  
14  
15 540 Su, X., Du, X., Zhang, K., Cote, L.R., De Pisapia, N., Venuti, P. (2017).  
16  
17 541 Neurobiology of culturally common maternal responses to infant cry. *Proceedings*  
18  
19 542 *of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 114(45),  
20  
21 543 E9465–E9473.  
22  
23 544 Carruthers, I.M., Natan, R.G., Geffen, M.N. (2013). Encoding of ultrasonic  
24  
25 545 vocalizations in the auditory cortex. *Journal of Neurophysiology*, 109(7), pp. 1912-  
26  
27 546 27.  
28  
29 547 Cherry, J., Izard, M., Simons, E. (1987). Description of ultrasonic vocalizations of the  
30  
31 548 mouse lemur (*microcebus murinus*) and the fat-tailed dwarf lemur (*cheirogaleus*  
32  
33 549 *medius*). *American Journal of Primatology*, 13, 181–185.  
34  
35 550 Crowe, H. P., & Zeskind, P. S. (1992). Psychophysiological and perceptual responses to  
36  
37 551 infant cries varying in pitch: Comparison of adults with low and high scores on the  
38  
39 552 Child Abuse Potential Inventory. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 16(1), 19-29.  
40  
41 553 Doi, H., Shinohara, K. (2012). Event-related potentials elicited in mothers by their own  
42  
43 554 and unfamiliar infants' faces with crying and smiling expression. *Neuropsychologia* ,  
44  
45 555 50(7), 1297–1307.  
46  
47 556 Doi, H., Nishitani, S., Shinohara, K. (2013). NIRS as a tool for assaying emotional  
48  
49 557 function in the prefrontal cortex. *Frontiers in Human Neurosciences*, 7:770. doi:  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

- 1  
2  
3 558 10.3389/fnhum.2013.00770.  
4  
5 559 Ehret, G. (1987). Left hemisphere advantage in the mouse brain for recognizing  
6  
7 560 ultrasonic communication calls. *Nature*, 325, 249–251.  
8  
9  
10 561 Eriksson, M., Lundeberg, T., Uvnäs-Moberg, K. (1996). Studies on cutaneous blood  
11  
12 562 flow in the mammary gland of lactating rats. *Acta physiologica Scandinavica*,  
13  
14 563 158(1), pp. 1-6.  
15  
16  
17 564 Esposito, G., Venuti, P. 2010 Developmental changes in the fundamental frequency (f0)  
18  
19 565 of infants' cries: A study of children with autism spectrum disorder. *Early Child*  
20  
21 566 *Development and Care*, 180(8), 1093–1102.  
22  
23  
24 567 Groh, A. M., & Roisman, G. I. (2009). Adults' autonomic and subjective emotional  
25  
26 568 responses to infant vocalizations: The role of secure base script knowledge.  
27  
28 569 *Developmental Psychology*, 45(3), 889-893.  
29  
30  
31 570 Janbu, T., Koss, K.S., Thoresen, M., Wesche, J. (1985). Blood velocities to the female  
32  
33 571 breast during lactation and following oxytocin injections. *Journal of Developmental*  
34  
35 572 *Physiology*, 7(6), pp. 373-80.  
36  
37  
38 573 Japundžić-Žigon, N. (2013). Vasopressin and Oxytocin in Control of the Cardiovascular  
39  
40 574 System. *Current Neuropharmacology*, 11(2), pp. 218–230.  
41  
42  
43 575 Johnson, J., Kellogg, D. (2010). Local thermal control of the human cutaneous  
44  
45 576 circulation. *Journal of Applied Physiology*, 109(4), 1229–1238.  
46  
47  
48 577 Joosen, K. J., Mesman, J., Bakermans- Kranenburg, M. J., Pieper, S., Zeskind, P. S., &  
49  
50 578 van IJzendoorn, M. H. (2013). Physiological reactivity to infant crying and  
51  
52 579 observed maternal sensitivity. *Infancy*, 18(3), 414-431.  
53  
54  
55 580 Kent, R., Murray, A. (1982). Acoustic features of infant vocalic utterances at 3, 6, and 9  
56  
57 581 months. *Journal of Acoustic Society of America*, 72, 353–365.  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

- 1  
2  
3 582 Kim, P., Feldman, R., Mayes, L., Leckman, J., Swain, J. (2011). Breastfeeding, brain  
4  
5 583 activation to own infant cry, and maternal sensitivity. *J Child Psychology and*  
6  
7 584 *Psychiatry*, 52(8), 907–915.
- 10 585 Kingston, J., Kawahara, S., Chambless, D., Key, M., Mash, D., Watsky, S. (2014).  
11  
12 586 Context effects as auditory contrast. *Attention, perception and psychophysics*,  
13  
14 587 76(5), pp. 1437-64.
- 17 588 Kimura, C., Matsuoka, M. (2007). Changes in breast skin temperature during the course  
18  
19 589 of breastfeeding. *Journal of human lactation*, 23(1):60-9.
- 22 590 Kuribayashi, R., Nittono, H. (2017). High-Resolution Audio with Inaudible High-  
23  
24 591 Frequency Components Induces a Relaxed Attentional State without Conscious  
25  
26 592 Awareness. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8:93. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00093.  
27  
28 593 eCollection 2017.
- 31 594 Kuribayashi, R., Yamamoto, R., Nittono, H. (2014). High-resolution music with  
32  
33 595 inaudible high-frequency components produces a lagged effect on human  
34  
35 596 electroencephalographic activities. *Neuroreport*, 25(9), pp. 651-5.
- 39 597 Laurent, H., Stevens, A., Ablow, J. (2011). Neural correlates of hypothalamic-pituitary-  
40  
41 598 adrenal regulation of mothers with their infants. *Biological Psychiatry*, 70(9), 826–  
42  
43 599 832.
- 46 600 Leon-Carrion J., Damas J., Izzetoglu K., Pourrezai K., Martín-Rodríguez J. F., Barroso  
47  
48 601 y Martin J. M., et al. (2006). Differential time course and intensity of PFC  
49  
50 602 activation for men and women in response to emotional stimuli: a functional near-  
51  
52 603 infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) study. *Neuroscience Letters*, 403, pp. 90–  
53  
54 604 9510.1016/j.neulet.2006.04.050
- 58 605 Lieberman, P., Harris, K., Wolff, P., Russell, L. (1971). Newborn infant cry and  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

- 1  
2  
3 606 nonhuman primate vocalization. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing*  
4  
5 607 *Research*, 14, 718–727.  
6  
7 608 Lingle, S., Wyman, M., Kotrba, R., Teichroeb, L., Romanow, C. (2012). What makes a  
8  
9 609 cry a cry? A review of infant distress vocalizations. *Current Zoology*, 58, 698–725.  
10  
11 610 Marlin, B., Mitre, M., D’amour, J., Chao, M., Froemke, R. (2015). Oxytocin enables  
12  
13 611 maternal behavior by balancing cortical inhibition. *Nature*, 520, 499–504.  
14  
15 612 Minagawa-Kawai Y., Naoi N., Kojima S. (2009). A New Approach to Functional  
16  
17 613 Neuroimaging: Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS). Tokyo: Keio University Press  
18  
19 614 Newman, J. (2007). Neural circuits underlying crying and cry responding in mammals.  
20  
21 615 *Behavioural Brain Research*, 182, 155–165.  
22  
23 616 Oohashi, T., Kawai, N., Nishina, E., Honda, M., Yagi, R., Nakamura, S., Morimoto, M.,  
24  
25 617 Maekawa, T., Yonekura, Y., Shibasaki, H. (2006). The role of biological system  
26  
27 618 other than auditory air-conduction in the emergence of the hypersonic effect. *Brain*  
28  
29 619 *Research*, 1073, 339–347.  
30  
31 620 Oohashi, T., Nishina, E., Honda, M., Yonekura, Y., Fuwamoto, Y., Kawai, N., Maekawa,  
32  
33 621 T., Nakamura, S., Fukuyama, H., Shibasaki, H. (2000). Inaudible high-frequency  
34  
35 622 sounds affect brain activity: hypersonic effect. *Journal of Neurophysiology*, 83,  
36  
37 623 3548–3558.  
38  
39 624 Out, D., Pieper, S., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M.J., van Ijzendoorn, M.H. (2010).  
40  
41 625 Physiological reactivity to infant crying: a behavioral genetic study. *Genes, brain,*  
42  
43 626 *and behavior*, 9(8), pp. 868-76.  
44  
45 627 Portfors, C.V., Perkel, D.J. (2015). The role of ultrasonic vocalizations in mouse  
46  
47 628 communication. *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*, 0, pp. 115–120.  
48  
49 629 Riem, M.M., Bakermans-Kranenburg, M.J., Pieper, S., Tops, M., Boksem, M.A.,  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

- 1  
2  
3 630 Vermeiren, R.R., van Ijzendoorn, M.H., Rombouts, S.A. (2011) Oxytocin  
4  
5 631 modulates amygdala, insula, and inferior frontal gyrus responses to infant crying: a  
6  
7 632 randomized controlled trial. *Biological Psychiatry*, 70, 291–297.  
8  
9  
10 633 Rilling, J., Young, L. (2014). The biology of mammalian parenting and its effect on  
11  
12 634 offspring social development. *Science*, 345, 771–776.  
13  
14  
15 635 Sewell, G. (1970). Ultrasonic communication in rodents. *Nature*, 227, 410.  
16  
17 636 Sales, G. (2010). Ultrasonic calls of wild and wild-type rodents in In S. M. Brudzynski  
18  
19 637 (Ed.) Handbook of mammalian vocalization, Academic Press: UK. pp. 77–88.  
20  
21  
22 638 Takahashi T., Okabe S., Broin P., Kikusui T., Hiroi N. (2016). Structure and function of  
23  
24 639 neonatal social communication in a genetic mouse model of autism. *Molecular*  
25  
26 640 *Psychiatry*, 21(9), 1208–1214.  
27  
28  
29 641 Taylor, N., Tipton, M., Kenny, G. (2014). Considerations for the measurement of core,  
30  
31 642 skin and mean body temperatures. *Journal of Thermal Biology*, 46, 72–101.  
32  
33  
34 643 Tanimoto, K., Kusaka, T., Nishida, T., Ogawa, K., Kato, I., Ijichi, S., Mikami, J., Sobue,  
35  
36 644 I., Isobe, K., Itoh, S. (2011). Hemodynamic changes in the breast and frontal cortex  
37  
38 645 of mothers during breastfeeding. *Pediatric Research*, 70, 400–405.  
39  
40  
41 646 Thaler, L., Reich G., Zhan X., Kish D., Antoniou M. (2017). Mouth-clicks used by blind  
42  
43 647 expert human echolocators - signal description and model based signal synthesis.  
44  
45 648 *PLoS Computational Biology*, 13(8), e1005670.  
46  
47  
48 649 van der Hoek, M., den Haan, L., Kaspers, A., Steenbergen, W., Bosschaart, N. (2019).  
49  
50 650 Cutaneous perfusion of the human lactating breast: a pilot study with laser Doppler  
51  
52 651 perfusion monitoring. *Physiological measurement*, 40(5), 05NT01. doi:  
53  
54 652 10.1088/1361-6579/ab1ad7.  
55  
56  
57  
58 653 Vuorenkoski, V., WaSZ-Hockert, O., Koivisto, E., Lind, J. (1969). The effect of cry  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65



- 1  
2  
3 654 stimulus on the temperature of the lactating breast of primipara. a thermographic  
4  
5 655 study. *Experientia* **25(12)**, 1286–1287.  
6  
7 656 Wohr, M., Schwarting, R. (2008). Maternal care, isolation-induced infant ultrasonic  
8  
9 657 calling, and their relations to adult anxiety-related behavior in the rat. *Behavioral*  
10  
11 658 *Neuroscience*, 122, 310–330.  
12  
13 659 Yagi R., Nishina E., Honda M., Oohashi T. (2003). Modulatory effect of inaudible high-  
14  
15 660 frequency sounds on human acoustic perception. *Neuroscience Letters*, 351(3),  
16  
17 661 191–195.  
18  
19 662 Yagi R., Nishina E., Oohashi T. (2003). A method for behavioral evaluation of the  
20  
21 663 “hypersonic effect”. *Acoustical Science and Technology*, 24, pp. 197–200.  
22  
23 664 Zimmerberg, B., Brunelli, S., Fluty, A.C.A.F. (2005). Differences in affective behaviors  
24  
25 665 and hippocampal allopregnanolone levels in adult rats of lines selectively bred for  
26  
27 666 infantile vocalizations. *Behavioural Brain Research*, 159, 301–311.  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34 667  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3 **668 Figure Legends**

4  
5 669

6  
7 **670 Figure 1. a) Spectrogram and normalized amplitude of one natural infant cry. b)**

8  
9  
10 671 Magnified spectrogram within the time-window (2.0-3.0 sec) indicated by two  
11  
12 672 vertical black lines in **a**). Color bars represent magnitude in dB.

13  
14  
15 673

16  
17 **674 Figure 2. Examples of normalized amplitudes (uppermost panel) and spectrograms**

18  
19  
20 675 (middle panel) of stimulus sounds in the three conditions (Natural Cries, Scrambled  
21  
22 676 Cries, and Ultrasonic Only Cries) used in experiment 1 and experiment 2. The

23  
24 677 spectrograms within time-window (5.0-6.0 sec) flanked by two black vertical lines  
25  
26  
27 678 are magnified and described in finer temporal resolution in the lowermost panels.

28  
29  
30 679 The amplitudes were normalized by the maximum signal value of the natural cry  
31  
32 680 waveform. Color bars represent magnitude in dB.

33  
34 681

35  
36  
37 **682 Figure 3. Schematic diagrams of experimental method. Illustration of the apparatus and**

38  
39 683 sensor positions on participants' breasts. Participants sit in front of the two speakers  
40  
41 684 that play cry stimuli. The blue and red speaker grills represent the speakers used to

42  
43  
44 685 play audible and ultrasonic components of the stimuli, respectively.

45  
46 686

47  
48  
49 **687 Figure 4. Temporal course of a) oxyHb change and b) deoxyHb change in mothers'**

50  
51 688 breasts (2-channels average) in the three conditions (Natural Cries, Scrambled Cries  
52  
53 689 and Ultrasonic Only Cries) in Experiment 1. The two vertical dashed lines indicate

54  
55  
56 690 the beginning and the end of the cry stimulus. The error bars represent standard

57  
58  
59 691 errors of standardized oxyHb values within 5-sec time windows.

60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65

692

693 **Figure 5.** Temporal course of **a)** oxyHb change and **b)** deoxyHb change in mothers'

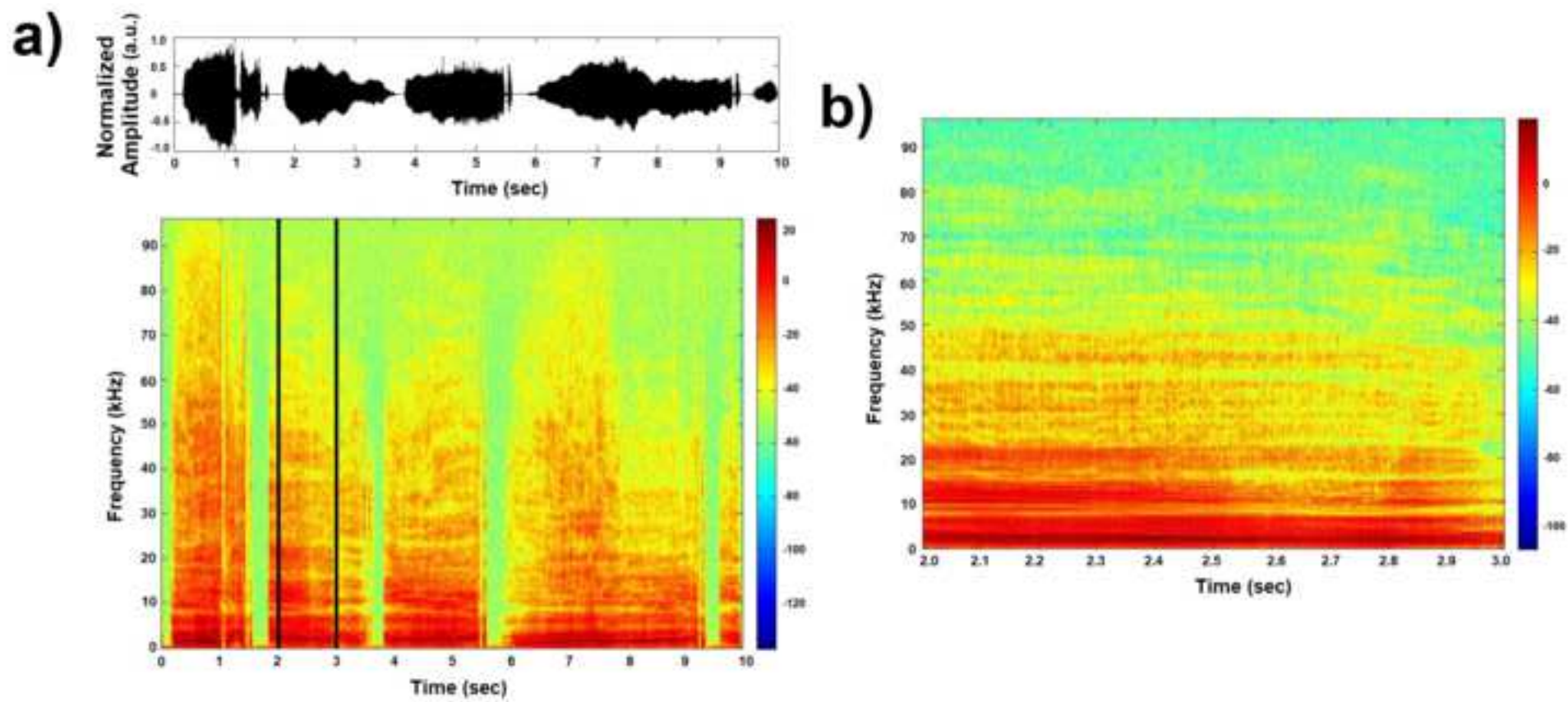
694 breasts (2-channels average) in the three conditions (Natural Cries, Scrambled Cries

695 and Ultrasonic Only Cries) in Experiment 2. The two vertical dashed lines indicate

696 the beginning and the end of the cry stimulus. The error bars represent standard

697 errors of standardized oxyHb values within 5-sec time windows.

698



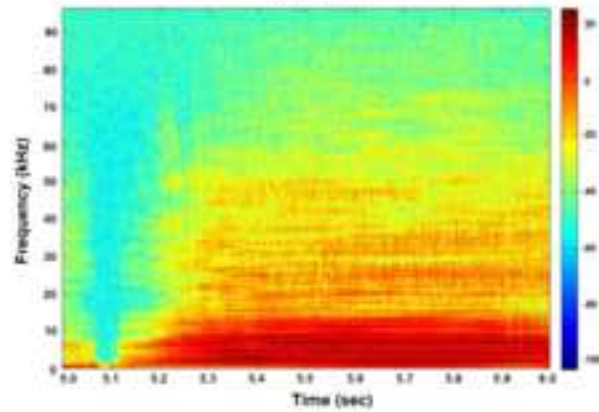
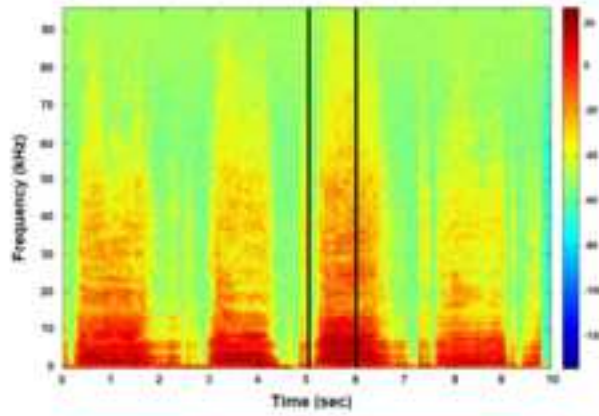
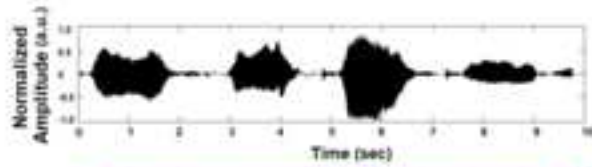
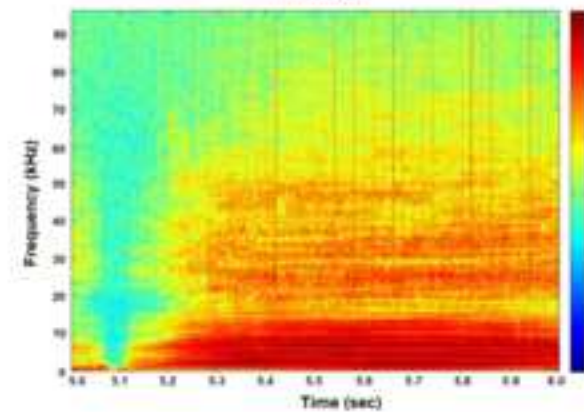
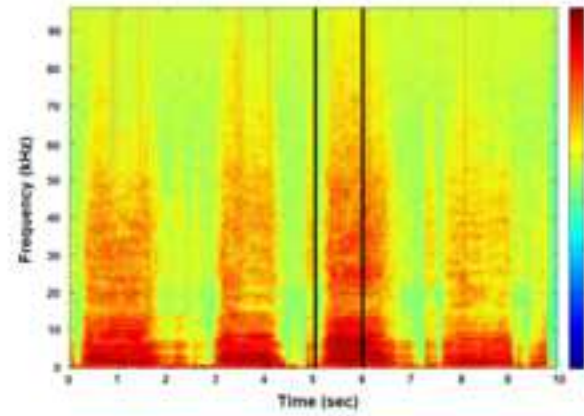
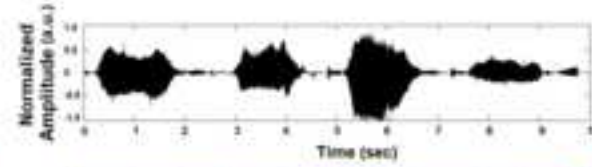
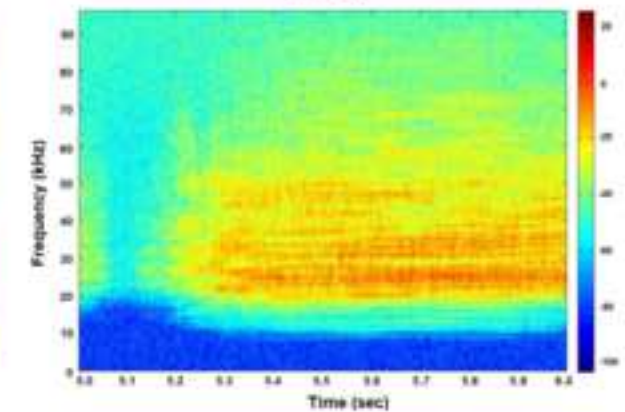
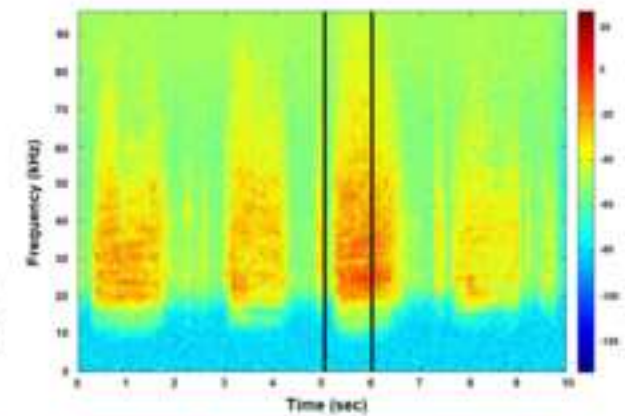
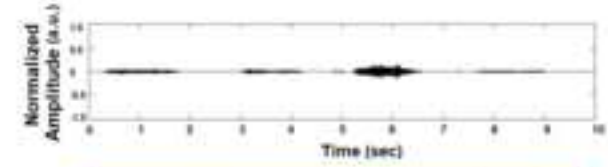
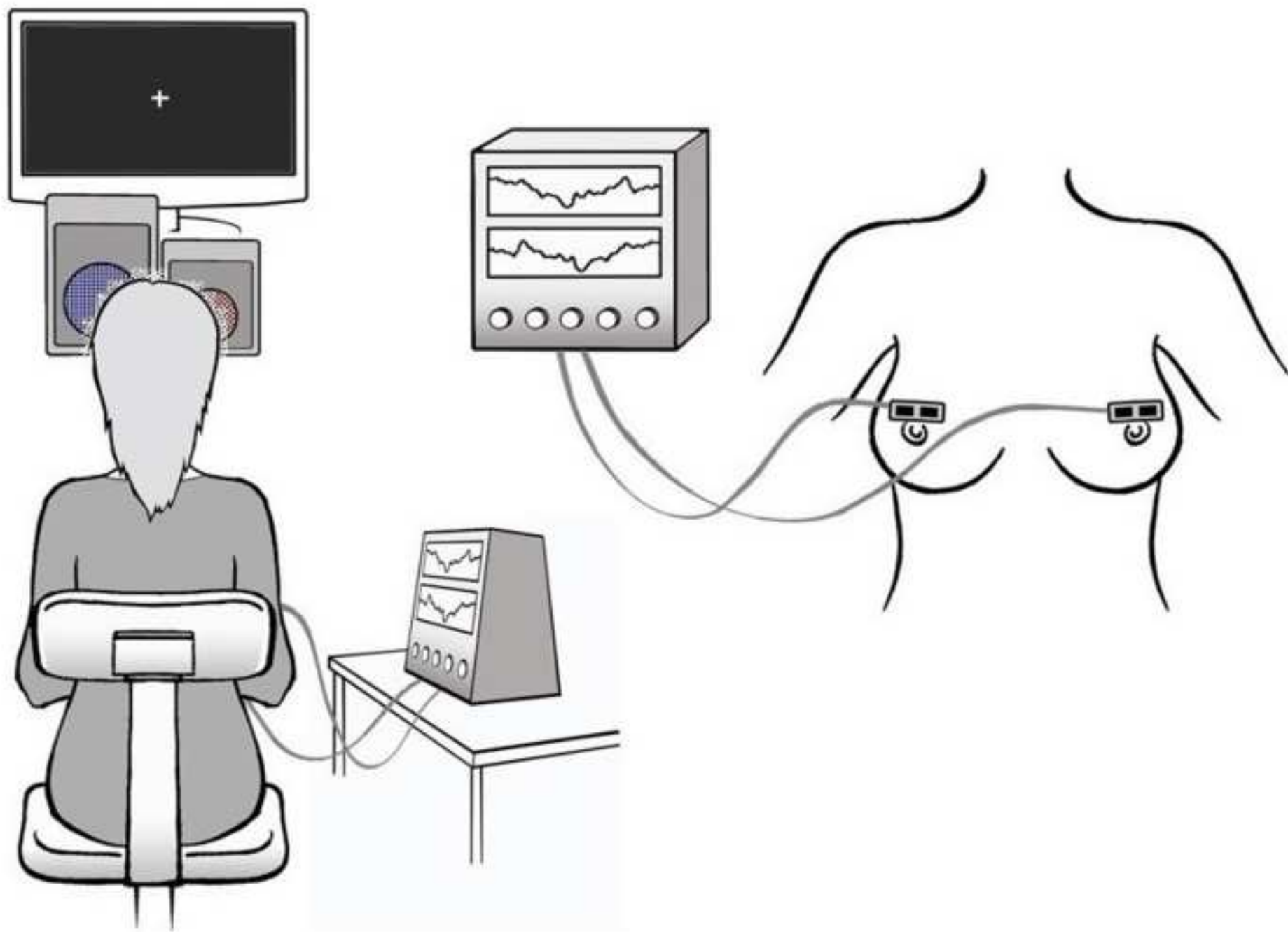
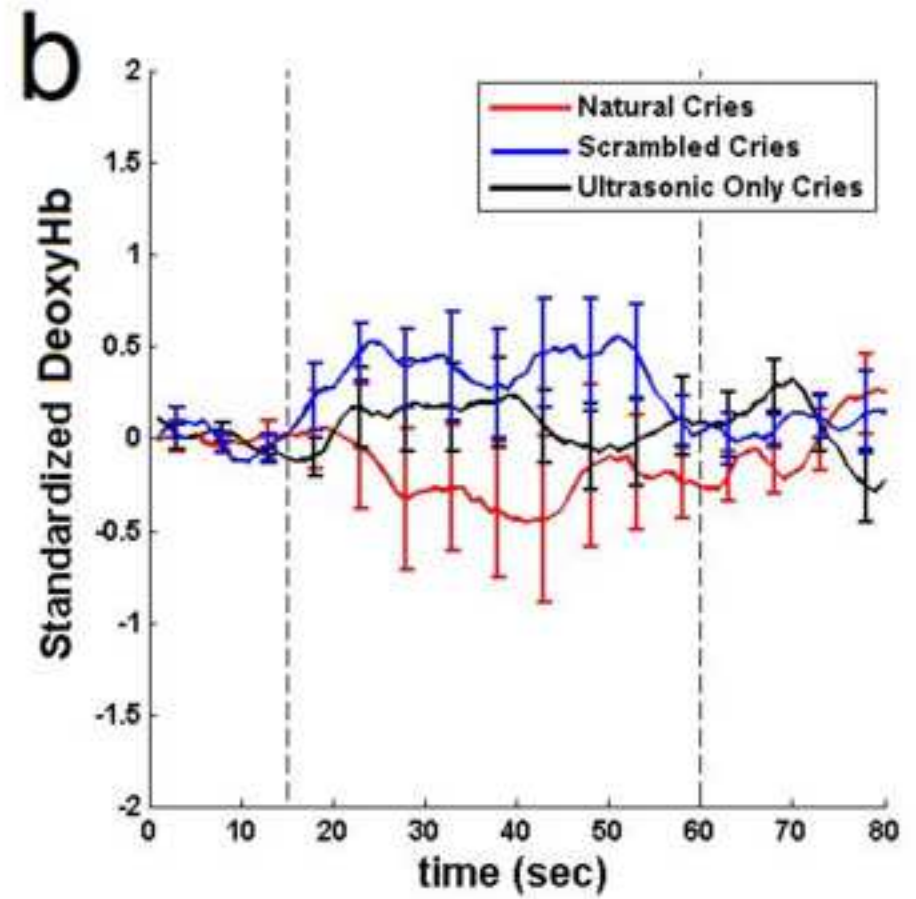
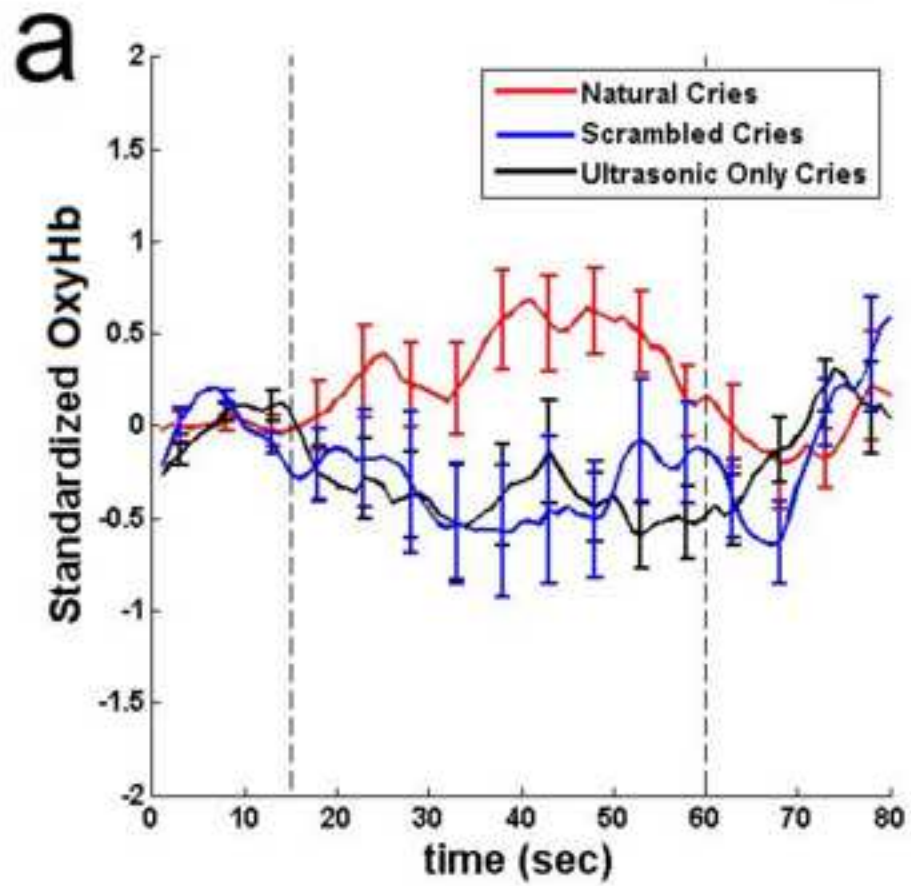
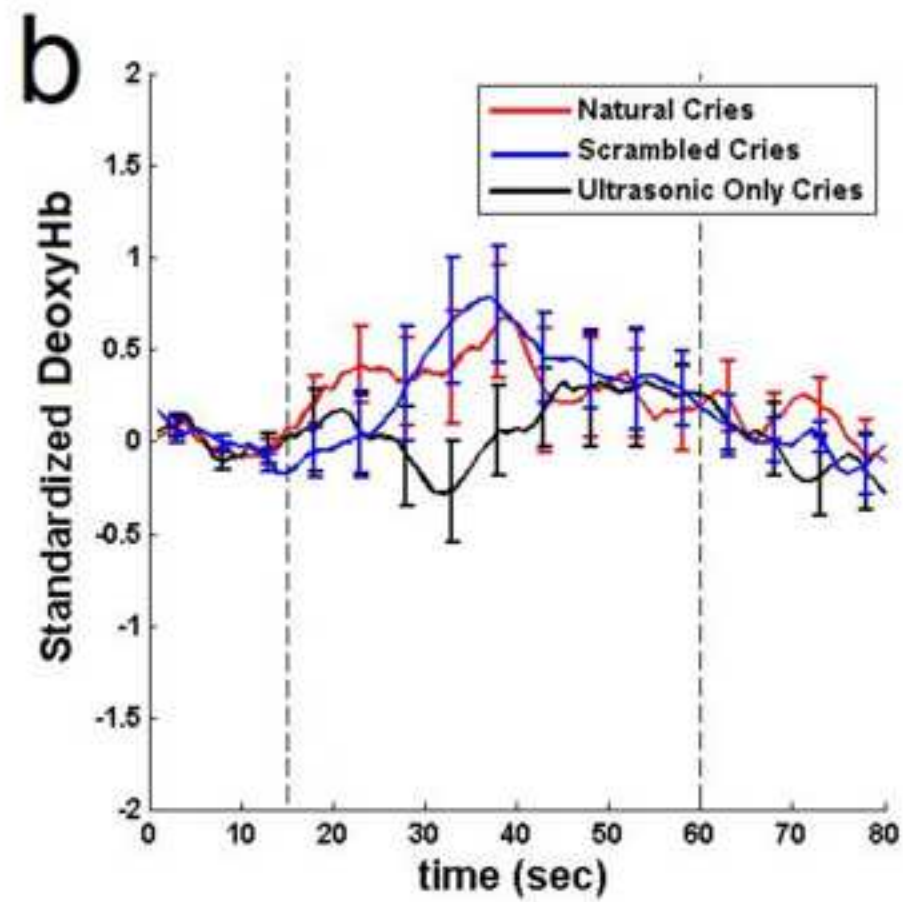
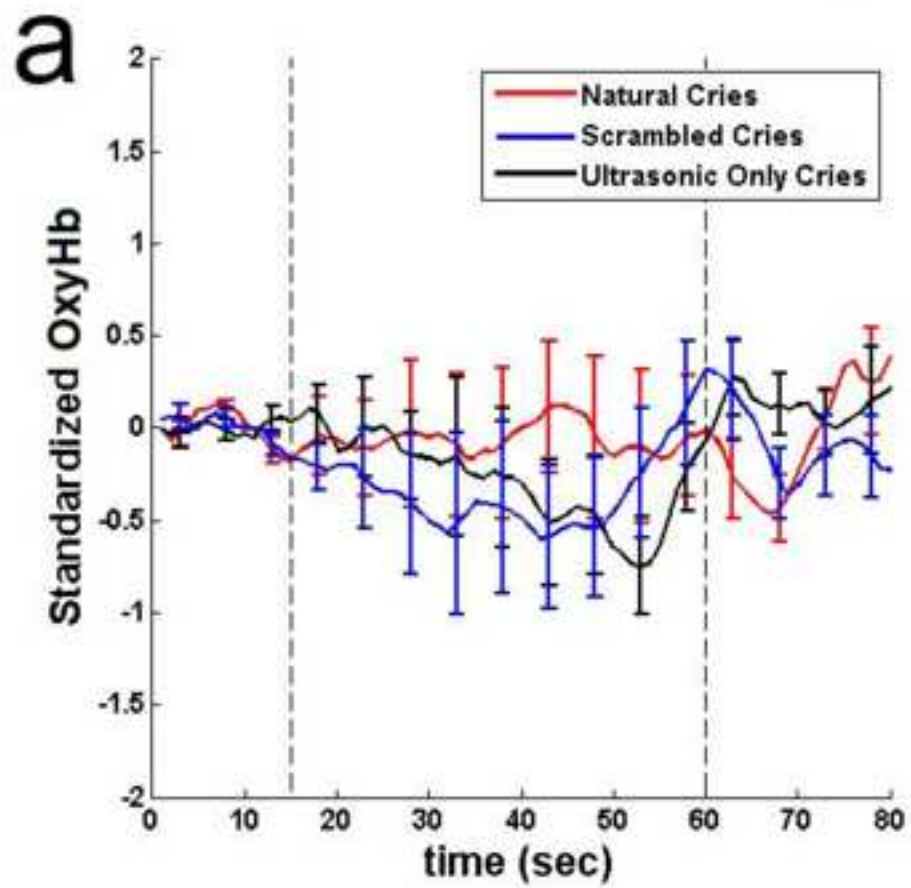
**a) Natural Cries****b) Scrambled Cries****c) Ultrasonic Only Cries**

Figure 3









1 *Table 1. Table of ANOVA results on oxyHb in Experiment 1*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Channel Side	0.69	1	0.69	0.99	0.335	0.06
Error	11.14	16	0.7			
Cry Type	12.02	2	6.01	6.47	0.004**	0.29
Error	29.7	32	0.93			
Channel Side x Cry Type	1.42	2	0.71	1.64	0.21	0.09
Error	13.81	32	0.43			

2 \*\*  $p < .01$

Table 2. ANOVA table of simple main effect of the type of cry on oxyHb in each time-window in Experiment 1.

Period	Time Window	Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	$\eta_p^2$
Baseline	1	Cry Type	0.16	2	0.08	1.55	0.229	0.09
		Error	1.65	32	0.05			
	2	Cry Type	0.01	2	0.01	0.33	0.718	0.02
		Error	0.51	32	0.02			
	3	Cry Type	0.11	2	0.05	0.86	0.432	0.05
		Error	1.99	32	0.06			
Stimulation	4	Cry Type	1.61	2	0.8	1.61	0.215	0.09
		Error	15.92	32	0.5			
	5	Cry Type	7.1	2	3.55	2.85	0.073#	0.15
		Error	39.93	32	1.25			
	6	Cry Type	8.22	2	4.11	2.21	0.126	0.12
		Error	59.51	32	1.86			
	7	Cry Type	12.81	2	6.4	3.35	0.048*	0.17
		Error	61.17	32	1.91			
	8	Cry Type	24.78	2	12.39	6.03	0.006**	0.27
		Error	65.76	32	2.06			
	9	Cry Type	21.03	2	10.52	4.4	0.021*	0.22
		Error	76.51	32	2.39			

	10	Cry Type	24.22	2	12.11	5.14	0.012*	0.24
		Error	75.34	32	2.35			
	11	Cry Type	18.54	2	9.27	4.26	0.023*	0.21
		Error	69.7	32	2.18			
	12	Cry Type	8.57	2	4.28	2.7	0.083#	0.14
		Error	50.83	32	1.59			
Post	13	Cry Type	3.59	2	1.8	1.58	0.222	0.09
Stimulation		Error	36.38	32	1.14			
	14	Cry Type	3.47	2	1.73	1.19	0.317	0.07
		Error	46.53	32	1.45			
	15	Cry Type	1.76	2	0.88	1.59	0.219	0.09
		Error	17.67	32	0.55			
	16	Cry Type	1.53	2	0.77	0.43	0.657	0.03
		Error	57.72	32	1.8			

# $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

Table 3. Results of pairwise comparisons in time-windows in which simple main effect of the type of cry reached significance.

Time				adjusted
Window	Comparison	Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value
7	NC > SC	0.74	2.35	0.097#
	NC > UOC	0.77	2.06	0.112
	SC > UOC	0.03	0.1	0.921
8	NC > UOC	1.12	2.7	0.047*
	NC > SC	0.94	2.64	0.047*
	SC > UOC	0.18	0.72	0.479
9	NC > UOC	1.06	2.56	0.063#
	NC > SC	0.82	2.01	0.123
	SC > UOC	0.25	0.84	0.411
10	NC > UOC	1.06	2.81	0.038*
	NC > SC	1.00	2.43	0.055#
	SC > UOC	0.06	0.19	0.855
11	NC > SC	1.04	2.8	0.038*
	NC > UOC	0.63	1.74	0.204
	SC < UOC	-0.4	1.19	0.251

NC: Natural Cry, SC: Scrambled Cry, UOC: Ultrasonic Only Cry, # $p < .10$ , \* $p < .05$

1 *Table 4. Table of ANOVA results on deoxyHb in Experiment 1*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Channel Side	0.05	1	0.05	1.19	0.291	0.07
Error	0.66	16	0.04			
Cry Type	1.28	2	0.64	2.32	0.115	0.13
Error	8.84	32	0.28			
Channel Side x Cry Type	0.35	2	0.18	1.33	0.278	0.08
Error	4.2	32	0.13			

2

1 *Table 5. Table of ANOVA results on oxyHb in Experiment 2*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Channel Side	0.36	1	0.36	0.58	0.459	0.03
Error	9.88	16	0.62			
Cry Type	1.45	2	0.72	0.73	0.488	0.04
Error	31.62	32	0.99			
Channel Side x Cry Type	1.15	2	0.58	0.88	0.426	0.05
Error	21.04	32	0.66			

2

1 *Table 6. Table of ANOVA results on deoxyHb in Experiment 2*

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta_p^2$
Channel Side	0.32	1	0.32	0.39	0.542	0.02
Error	13.29	16	0.83			
Cry Type	1.3	2	0.65	0.79	0.463	0.05
Error	26.38	32	0.82			
Channel Side x Cry Type	0.33	2	0.16	0.49	0.615	0.03
Error	10.7	32	0.33			

2