

How can musicians keep playing despite amnesia?

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BBC News:

When British conductor and musician Clive Wearing contracted a brain infection in 1985 he was left with a memory span of only 10 seconds.

The infection – herpes encephalitis – left him unable to recognise people he had seen or remember things that had been said just moments earlier.

But despite being acknowledged by doctors as having one of the most severe cases of amnesia ever, his musical ability and much of his musical memory was intact.

Now aged 73, he is still able to read music and play the piano and once even conducted his former choir again.

Now researchers believe they are closer to understanding how musical memory is preserved in some people – even when they can remember almost nothing of their past.

He was unable to retain even simple information, such as the layout of his apartment. At a Society for Neuroscience meeting in Washington this month, a group of German neurologists described the case of a professional cellist, referred to as PM, who contracted herpes encephalitis virus in 2005.

Read the whole story: [BBC News](#)