

## Flautists the worst orchestra members for spreading

By Phoebe Southworth

FLAUTISTS should sit three metres away from other orchestra members as their spit particles travel the furthest when playing, a study has found.

Nine musicians from the Bavarian Symphony Orchestra were filmed performing Beethoven's 9th symphony. The aerosol cloud emitted by the wind instrument players – three flautists, three trumpeters and three clarinetists – was analysed by scientists.

Flautists were found to produce the largest dispersion, with spit particles reaching a maximum distance of 1.88m. The researchers therefore recommend the flute section be positioned so there is a two to three-metre gap between each other and the rest of the musicians.

Dr Bryan Bzdek, a research fellow at the University of Bristol's Aerosol Research Centre, said: "They should consider the end of their instrument as an extension of their mouth, and so if the end is not directed towards the floor, it makes sense to increase physical distance to compensate."

The study, yet to be peer reviewed, was published on the website medRxiv.

