

Wellness Monthly

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The Healing Power of Music

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Have you ever played a quiet song to help you relax? Or worked out while listening to high-energy music? Or hummed a happy tune and suddenly realized your bad mood had disappeared? Then you've experienced the healing power of music. In fact, music is used as a therapy for some health concerns.

Music therapy is typically led by a licensed professional. Part of the health care team, a music therapist uses all forms of music to work with clients to reach their goals. After performing an assessment, he or she may use singing, playing instruments, listening to music, moving to music, writing lyrics or music, or a combination. Music therapy can benefit people at any age and with a number of health conditions.

Though evidence is mixed for some conditions, music therapy may be especially helpful for people with:

Chronic disease and pain. Music can help lower heart rate and blood pressure. It can also ease stress, a major risk factor for heart disease and diabetes.

Autism. Music may help improve focus, as well as relieve anxiety and frustration.

Parkinson's disease. Music, including drumming, dance and movement groups, can improve the side effects of Parkinson's disease.

Depression and mental health issues. Music can lighten a mood. It can also help people more easily talk about their feelings or make positive life changes.

Alzheimer's disease. With older people who have age-related memory challenges, including Alzheimer's disease, music may help improve agitation, depression and quality of life. Sometimes, music is just what the doctor ordered.

Benefits of Music Therapy

Music therapy may help people with a variety of conditions, from relieving headache and chronic pain, to easing stress before surgery. Music can sometimes be an answer for people who haven't responded to other forms of treatment. Music therapy may:

- Improve physical function
- Ease stress and anxiety
- Help people relax
- Improve sleep
- Decrease all kinds of pain
- Boost memory and thinking
- Ease a person's ability to talk and interact with others



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