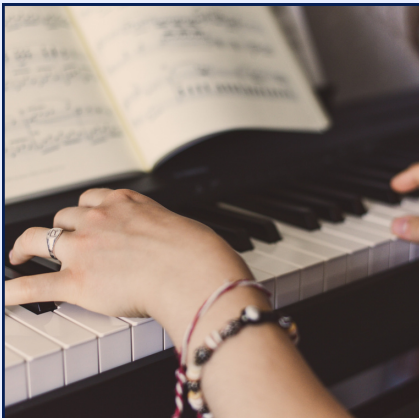




Fast Facts

- The field of music therapy gained recognition following its use in VA hospitals after WWII to aid in the healing process.
- Brain scans seem to show that music and exercise are the only two activities that stimulate your entire brain.



What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is a well-recognized treatment that uses music in specific ways to help patients identify and deal with social, mental, emotional, or physical concerns. Music therapy can play an important part in supporting cancer patients, with benefits before, during, and after treatment.

A music therapist will assess the needs of a patient by their response to hearing music or how they respond to questions after hearing it. The therapist uses this information to design a treatment program.

Music therapy is always tailored for your needs. It may include the therapist or patient playing a musical instrument or singing, the patient composing music, or listening to, dancing, or moving to music.

Music therapy helps people express feelings or thoughts in a more complex, multi-dimensional way than just words. This can help in coping with trauma or disease, including cancer.

What Conditions Does Music Therapy Treat?

Music therapy is used to help with a variety of physical and mental health conditions and address symptoms related to chronic health concerns, including:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| • Alzheimer's | • Speech loss |
| • Depression | • Neurological disorders |
| • Hospital/procedural anxiety | • Attention deficit disorder/Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder |
| • Autism/autism spectrum disorder | • Chronic and acute pain relief |
| • Cancer | • Problems with cognitive function |
| • Anxiety | • Learning disabilities |
| • Physical therapy/rehabilitation | |
| • Dementia | |
| • Mood disorders | |



How Does Music Therapy Help People With Cancer?

Music therapy can help people with cancer by:

- Reducing anxiety and stress related to the diagnosis and procedures.
- Improving mood and helping with relaxation.
- Helping them develop coping skills and the ability to be resilient in the face of challenges.

Is There Evidence That Music Therapy Works?

In the last 20 years, as patients increasingly integrate complementary and alternative medicine into their treatment plans, more and more literature is being published exploring and confirming the positive impact music therapy has on certain conditions. A sample includes:

- A systematic review of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder who received music therapy as an adjunct treatment found that music therapy significantly improved skills related to social interaction, verbal communication, behavior initiation and reciprocating socially expressed emotional cues.¹
- A systematic review of dementia patients who received music therapy found that the music therapy had a moderately large impact on reducing disruptive behaviors, anxiety levels and depressive moods, and improving cognitive functioning.²
- A randomized control trial of people suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder found that those who engaged in music therapy in addition to usual care experienced a reduction in their obsessions/obsessive behaviors as well as co-morbid anxiety and/or depression.³
- Palliative care patients who received music therapy experienced a significant reduction in pain.⁴

Is There Evidence That Music Therapy Helps With Cancer?

Yes. It has been shown to help in the following ways:⁵⁻⁸

- Helping treatment-related symptoms such as pain, nausea, and fatigue.
- Reducing anxiety and stress from procedures.
- Improving mood and emotional well-being.
- Helping manage symptoms without medication.
- Giving people with cancer a way to express and communicate feelings.
- Improving patients' experiences in treatment and life in general.
- In general, cancer patients who participated in music therapy were better able to manage their symptoms, expressed more hope about their ability to survive cancer, and were better able to access and discuss traumatic memories associated with their diagnosis.⁹ As noted above, music therapy has also been shown to decrease anxiety and depression in cancer patients.¹⁰

Is There Evidence That Music Therapy Helps With Cancer?

If you or your healthcare provider are seeking more in-depth research on the effectiveness or impact of music therapy on a particular health concern, have your healthcare provider visit www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=music+therapy

The **Beyond the Studio** podcast from the Canadian Association of Music Therapists offers fascinating perspectives on all aspects of music therapy for providers, patients, and caregivers who would like to learn more about this unique type of treatment and how it can help many different conditions.

Are There Precautions, Side Effects, or Safety Concerns I Should Know About Before I Start Music Therapy?

Music therapy is widely considered a safe way of addressing physical and mental conditions when delivered by a well trained certified music therapist. However, any form of therapy can cause some emotional discomfort. Talk to the music therapist if you have concerns about this.

How Often Should I Seek Treatment From a Music Therapy Practitioner? How Long is Each Session?

How often and for how long you will attend a music therapy session depends on why you are doing it and your personal music therapy program. Classes or individual sessions are often 30 minutes to an hour.

What Training or Certifications do Music Therapists Need?

In the United States, MT-BC (Music Therapist-Board Certified) is the most common certification. To practice music therapy, a therapist needs a bachelor's degree or higher from one of the 70 programs recognized by the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA). In addition to specific courses required by AMTA, music therapists must complete 1,200 hours of clinical practice before taking the certification exam. The Certification Board for Music Therapists supervises the exam and certification process.

Three older music therapy designations are no longer awarded, but still nationally recognized. These are the ACMT, CMT and RMT. Therapists who received them in the past and continue to maintain their certification are included in the National Music Therapy Registry.

How Do I Find a Music Therapist?

The American Music Therapy Association allows you to search by therapists, certification, and the condition you would like to treat:

netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=amta2&WebCode=IndSearch

The Certification Board for Music Therapists Search:

my.cbmt.org/cbmtssa/f?p=CRTSSA:17800:34507263103856:::17800::

Will my Insurance Company Cover the cost of Seeing A Music Therapy Practitioner?

Whether your insurance company covers music therapy depends on your individual coverage. Most insurance companies will cover some of the cost. Contact them to learn what they will pay for.

Should I Tell my Primary Care Provider That I am Seeing a Music Therapist?

Yes! Talk to your doctor or other health care provider before starting. Music therapy can go along with other treatments, but it is not meant to replace proven medical treatment. Any decisions regarding treatment plans should be discussed with your provider(s) before you make changes.

My Notes and Questions

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