

HEALTHBREAK

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The Power of Music

Music can be a powerful thing. Whether it's the song from a special day or a song that reminds you of your childhood, music can trigger an emotional response.

Music unites and connects us and brings us together — for example, the national anthem sung at a sporting event or a hymn sung by a choir at church.

Music can also impact our overall health — physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Here are just a few ways we can all gain something from the sound of music:

It's good for your heart. Music can help lower your heart rate, pulse, blood pressure, and body temperature, and some research has shown that music helps improve blood flow.

It boosts your mood. Music can increase serotonin and endorphins in the blood. Just hearing the beat to your favorite song can increase the brain's dopamine production (the feel-good hormone), making us feel happy while reducing feelings of anxiety and depression.

It calms you down. Listening to music can decrease cortisol (the stress hormone), helping to relieve stress and reduce tension. Evidence shows that listening to music — especially music blended with nature sounds — can calm your nerves when you feel stressed or anxious.

It relieves symptoms of depression. Music therapy — a technique that involves regular meetings with a certified music therapist — is often used to help improve mood through emotional expression. Music can positively affect depression symptoms and help pick you up when you're feeling down.

It pumps you up. Listening to tunes that pump you up can make you push harder, work longer, and increase your endurance during exercise.

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