**Music connects us**

**cohesion, lullabies, anthems, stir, bond,**

[ResearchersTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3741536/) think one of the most important functions of music is to create a feeling of ……………………….or social connectedness.

Evolutionary scientists say human beings may have developed a dependence on music as a communication tool because our ancestors descended from arboreal species — tree-dwellers who called to one another across the canopy.

Music remains a powerful way of uniting people:

* national ………………… connect crowds at sporting events
* protest songs ………………….. a sense of shared purpose during marches
* hymns build group identity in houses of worship
* love songs help prospective partners ………………… during courtship
* ……………………….. enable parents and infants to develop secure attachments

How, then, does music benefit us as individuals?

**Music’s effects on the mind**

**It can lead to better learning**

**stimulate, reward, engages,**

Doctors at Johns Hopkins [recommend](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/keep-your-brain-young-with-music) that you listen to music to……………………. your brain. Scientists know that listening to music …………………..your brain — they can see the active areas light up in MRI scans.

Researchers now know that just the promise of listening to music can make you want to learn more. In one 2019 [study](https://www.pnas.org/content/116/8/3310), people were more motivated to learn when they expected to listen to a song as their ……………………….

**Listening has limits**

A note of caution: You may want to withhold the earbuds for some students. [ResearchersTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5671572/) who tested students with lower working memory capacity found that listening to music — especially songs with lyrics — sometimes had a negative effect on learning.

**It can improve memory**

**, reverse, outperformed, processing,**

Music also has a positive effect on your ability to memorize.

In one [studyTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4197792/), researchers gave people tasks that required them to read and then recall short lists of words. Those who were listening to classical music …………………………those who worked in silence or with white noise.

The same study tracked how fast people could perform simple ………………………. tasks — matching numbers to geometrical shapes — and a similar benefit showed up. Mozart helped people complete the task faster and more accurately.

[Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/alzheimers-disease/expert-answers/music-and-alzheimers/faq-20058173) points out that while music doesn’t ……………………..the memory loss experienced by people with Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia, music has been found to [slow cognitive declineTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5267457/), helping people with mild or moderate dementia remember episodes from their lives.

Music memory is one of the brain functions most resistant to dementia. That’s why some caregivers have had success using music to calm dementia patients and build trusting connections with them.

**It can help treat mental illness**

**associated, triggers, connectedness,**

Music literally changes the brain. Neurological [researchers](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1364661313000491) have found that listening to music ……………………the release of several neurochemicals that play a role in brain function and mental health:

* dopamine, a chemical ……………………….with pleasure and “reward” centers
* stress hormones like cortisol
* serotonin and other hormones related to immunity
* oxytocin, a chemical that fosters the ability to connect to others

Although more research needs to be done to understand precisely how music can be used therapeutically to treat mental illness, some [studiesTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28553702) suggest that music therapy can improve the quality of life and social ………………………..for people with schizophrenia.

Dół formularza

**Music’s effects on mood**

A number of [researchersTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3741536/) have interviewed groups about why they listen to music. Study participants vary widely in terms of age, gender, and background, but they report strikingly similar reasons.

One of the most common uses of music? It helps people [regulate their emotions](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1348/000712610X506831), researchers found. It has the power to [change moods](https://www.healthline.com/health-news/mental-listening-to-music-lifts-or-reinforces-mood-051713) and help people process their feelings.

**It can help lower anxiety**

**anxiety, blended, stroke ,**

There’s lots of evidence that listening to music can help calm you in situations where you might feel anxious.

[StudiesTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30601431) have shown that people in rehab after a………………….. are more relaxed once they’ve listened to music for an hour.

Similar [studiesTrusted Source](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0070156) indicate that music ……………………with nature sounds help people feel less anxious. Even people facing [critical illnessTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30947484) feel less ……………………..after music therapy.

There’s conflicting evidence about whether listening to music has an effect on your body’s physiological stress response, however. [One studyTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3734071/) indicated that the body releases less cortisol, a stress hormone, when people listen to music. This same study referenced previous research stating that music had little measurable effect on cortisol levels.

One recent [studyTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3734071/) that measured several indicators of stress (not just cortisol) concluded that while listening to music *before* a stressful event doesn’t reduce anxiety, listening to relaxing music *after* a stressful event can help your nervous system recover faster.

**It helps the symptoms of depression**

A 2017 [research reviewTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5500733/) concluded that listening to music, particularly classical combined with jazz, had a positive effect on depression symptoms, especially when there were several listening sessions conducted by board certified music therapists.

Not into jazz or the classics? You may want to try a group percussion session instead. The same research review found that drum circles also had above-average benefits for people dealing with depression.

**Musical genre matters for depression**

One important note: [StudiesTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6542982/) have found that nostalgic sad tunes can actually increase symptoms of depression, especially if you tend to ruminate or withdraw socially. Not surprising, perhaps, but important to know if you want to use music to counteract the blues.

**Music’s effects on the body**

**It can help your heart health**

Music can make you want to move — and the benefits of dancing are well documented. Scientists also know that listening to music can [alterTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1860846/?report=reader) your breath rate, your heart rate, and your blood pressure, depending on the music’s intensity and tempo.

**It decreases fatigue**

**energizing, treshold, endurance,**

Anyone who has ever rolled down car windows and turned up the radio knows that music can be ……………………... There’s solid science behind that lived experience.

In 2015, [researchersTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4549311/#__ffn_sectitle) at Shanghai University found that relaxing music helped reduce fatigue and maintain muscle ……………………..when people were engaged in a repetitive task.

Music therapy sessions also [lessened fatigue](https://doi.org/10.1177/1534735418757349) in people receiving cancer treatments and raised the fatigue ………………………. for people engaged in demanding neuromuscular training, which leads us to the next big benefit.

**It boosts exercise performance**

**intensity, enhances , exertion, syncing,**

Exercise enthusiasts have long known that [music](https://www.healthline.com/health-news/upbeat-music-can-make-tough-exercise-easier) ………………………… their physical performance.

A 2020 [research review](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/bul0000216) confirms that working out with music improves your mood, helps your body exercise more efficiently, and cuts down on your awareness of …………………... Working out with music also leads to [longer workoutsTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5435671/).

In clinical settings, athletes who listened to high-…………………….., fast music during warmups [were motivatedTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3525819/) to perform better competitively.

You don’t have to be a world-class competitor to benefit: [ResearchTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22828457) shows that ……………………….. your workout to music can allow you to reach peak performance using less oxygen than if you did the same workout without the beat. Music acts as a metronome in your body, researchers said.

**It can help manage pain**

Specially trained music therapists use music to help alleviate pain in inpatient and outpatient settings. A 2016 [meta-analysisTrusted Source](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27760797) of over 90 studies reported that music helps people manage both acute and chronic pain better than medication alone.

**The takeaway**

Music exerts a powerful influence on human beings. It can boost memory, build task endurance, lighten your mood, reduce anxiety and depression, stave off fatigue, improve your response to pain, and help you work out more effectively.

Working with a [music therapist](https://www.healthline.com/health/sound-healing) is one effective way to take advantage of the many benefits music can have on your body, mind, and overall health.