



## What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is the specialized use of music by a credentialed professional to improve, maintain or restore the social, cognitive, physical, emotional and/or sensory needs of individuals.

Throughout history, music has been employed for its healing influences on health and behavior. In the 20th century, musicians were hired by hospitals during World War I and World War II to help wounded veterans. Music eased patient's suffering, as doctors noted soldiers responded positively to music both emotionally and physically.

Now, Certified Music Therapists work with clients in a variety of settings. These include: hospitals, rehabilitation and residential facilities, schools, correctional centers, mental health facilities and private practices.



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## Who benefits from Music therapy?

Certified Music Therapists treat clients of all ages, and with a variety of issues including:

- Autism
- Brain injury
- Cancer
- Chronic and acute pain
- Dementia
- Developmental disorders
- Learning disabilities
- Mental illness
- Physical disabilities
- Sleep disorders
- Substance abuse
- Trauma

### What does music therapy accomplish?

In a therapeutic setting, music is used to improve a client's physical and mental functioning through structured, evidence-based interventions. Therapists set individualized goals where clients may create or improvise music, play along or listen to music.

It is not necessary to have musical ability to benefit from music therapy. The act of expressing one's self through music is a form of communication for clients who are non-verbal or for those who have difficulty expressing themselves verbally.

Processing music uses a different part of the brain than language, often allowing clients with brain injuries to sing words with less difficulty than speaking.



### What happens during a music therapy session?

Music therapy is tailored to each individual's needs. Some of these methods may be used:

**Playing instruments** such as drums, piano or guitar promotes a socially acceptable release of tension and anger while helping to build social skills.

**Listening to music** helps to increase attention span and improve memory. Listening to music can alter behavior and mood.

**Movement** facilitated by the playing of instruments promotes the development of fine and gross motor skills. Clients can maintain muscle tone, improve balance and range of motion.

**Singing** improves speech and language skills as well as breath control. It also aids in learning new concepts.

**Improvising and Composing** helps with discovery and validation of feelings and emotions. It promotes a positive method of communication.

## Music therapy and Brain injury

Music therapy benefits people with brain injuries in the following areas:

**Speech and language.** Though a client may not be able to talk, they may be able to sing. Singing also improves breath control and timing of speech, which are essential skills for verbal communication.

**Memory/Cognition.** Clients often struggle with memory loss and distraction. Music therapy helps with sequencing and concentration. Song writing is an excellent tool for building self-esteem and cognitive skills like idea generation and initiation.

**Physical Issues.** Playing musical instruments may help with stretching, regaining strength and limb movement and strengthening muscles as well as eye-hand coordination.

**Emotional issues.** Clients with brain injury often experience anger and depression in the months following their injury. Listening to or playing music allows patients to express emotions and communicate in a positive way.

For more information about music therapy services from Rainbow Rehabilitation call:

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