

# Music & Health Benefits

## What are the health benefits of music?

Many physical, psychological and social benefits are associated with music, especially for seniors who struggle with dementia and other cognitive and physical challenges. Music is therapeutic and helps people to reconnect with the world. The longest lasting memories that people have are often musical memories, and listening to, playing or singing familiar songs helps people recall experiences.



Music has numerous health benefits. Music:

- Stimulates the brain
- Lessens stress and anxiety
- Reduces depression
- Increases productivity
- Improves one's mood
- Increases energy levels
- Increases cardiovascular strength
- Improves respiratory function
- Slows the decline of cognitive skills
- Minimizes the effect of arthritis
- Leads to increased involvement in activities
- Lessens feelings of isolation and loneliness
- Creates bonding experiences
- Creates opportunities to communicate
- Provides avenues for creative expression
- Fosters happiness and pleasure

## Music Therapy at A.G. Rhodes Health & Rehab

The Music Therapy Program at A.G. Rhodes is a component of the Therapy and Rehabilitation Department. Our Certified Music Therapist administers music therapy in group and individual settings. Treatment may take place at bedside, in resident living areas and in general activity spaces. Additionally, co-treatment between music therapy and other therapies including physical, occupational and speech, occurs on a weekly basis.

The way in which patients engage in music depends on their level of functioning and treatment goals. Patient goals may vary from improved speech (through singing), balance or strength, to increased motivation or attention. Several common music therapy practices involve listening to music, singing, moving to music or playing instruments. In addition to the clinical benefits, music therapy sessions are fun, motivating and light-hearted, while encompassing the personal musical preferences of the patients.

## Songs for Seniors

The *Songs for Seniors* program within our Music Therapy Department promotes the use of music as a therapeutic tool to connect with seniors. Music is incorporated into many areas of the day including therapy and rehabilitation sessions, organized activities and personal time.

A key component of the program is the use of music devices

that include songs tailored for individual residents to

enjoy. Staff have been trained under the MUSIC & MEMORY<sup>SM</sup> Certification Program to create personalized music playlists that are downloaded onto iPods. They facilitate sessions with residents who listen to their favorite songs and musical preferences. As a result, residents experience positive reactions while recalling fond pastimes, and they are more alert and engaged throughout the day.



## Support Songs for Seniors

You can support the *Songs for Seniors* program and help bring personalized music to the residents at A.G. Rhodes Health & Rehab.

Visit [www.agrhodes.org/songsforseniors](http://www.agrhodes.org/songsforseniors) for more information and to make a contribution to the program. Funds raised support the Music Therapy Department and help cover the costs of various items including iPods, downloadable music and headsets, as well as staff training.

For more information about A.G. Rhodes, or to contact us, visit [www.agrhodes.org](http://www.agrhodes.org) or call 1-800-357-2980. For more information about the Music Therapy Program, contact our Music Therapist, John Abel, MPH, MT-BC, at 770-891-3051 or [jabel@agrholders.org](mailto:jabel@agrholders.org).

