



## Music Therapy and Stroke Rehabilitation

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### What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is an evidence-based allied health service similar to physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology that uses music as the therapeutic tool to address physical, cognitive, social, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and/or behavioral needs.

### Why Should I Try Music Therapy?

- Music therapy can help stroke survivors regain, improve, and maintain physical and cognitive abilities, helping them to be as independent as possible in activities of daily living and able to live life as normally as possible.
- Due to the way the brain and body respond to music and motivational factors provided by music, music therapists can sometimes gain positive responses when others cannot.
- Music therapists can complement and enhance the work of other therapists such as physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists by collaboratively working on and reinforcing goals and exercises given by other disciplines.
- While many people are able to use music to entertain, music therapists provide an enjoyable way to enhance the overall quality of life of those they serve by providing a natural, non-threatening, fun, and reinforcing way to address needs in all domains (physical, cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral).

### How Do I Know if Someone is Qualified to Provide Music Therapy Services?

- Qualified music therapists carry the credential **MT-BC** indicating that they have passed the national, independent certification board exam and have maintained awareness of current practice through continuing education or retesting. **DO NOT** work with anyone claiming to be a music therapist without the MT-BC designation.
- **To confirm MT-BC status go to: [http://www.cbmt.org/certificant\\_search](http://www.cbmt.org/certificant_search)**
- Music therapists may carry the designation of Neurologic Music Therapist, which means that they have undergone additional training in this specific model of music therapy. Neurologic Music Therapist Fellow indicates that they have successfully passed advanced training and peer review of Neurologic Music Therapy techniques.
- It is highly recommended that stroke survivors work primarily with Neurologic Music Therapy Fellows, or if they are not available in your area, Neurologic Music Therapists.



## Benefits of Music Therapy with Stroke Survivors

### Speech

- Stimulate speech
- Improve initiation and fluency of speech
- Improve intelligibility/clarity of speech
- Improve articulation
- Improve breath support and voice volume
- Improve vocal range
- Improve vocal timbre and resonance (tone quality)
- Improve rate of speech

### General Cognitive

- Improve attention
- Improve executive functioning
- Improve comprehension
- Decrease visual neglect
- Improve short- and long-term memory

### Gait/Walking

- Practice pre-gait exercises
- Improve symmetry of gait (similarity between movements of left and right legs)
- Improve stride length (length of steps)
- Improve cadence of gait (speed)

### General Physical

- Increase ability to use impaired limbs
- Decrease pain, tension, and contractures
- Increase range of motion and flexibility
- Increase strength and endurance while decreasing fatigue and recovery time
- Improve circulation
- Improve posture and balance
- Increase coordination

### Emotional, Spiritual, and Psychosocial

- Provide emotional and spiritual support
- Provide resources for coping
- Provide opportunities for successful experiences
- Improve mood and affect
- Provide an outlet for safe self-expression
- Help validate challenges
- Provide opportunities for personal choice
- Improve sense of belonging
- Decrease fear, stress, and anxiety
- Increase interest and esteem
- Improve satisfaction with life
- Structure positive social interaction and decrease isolation