

FAST FACTS: Music as Nondrug Pain Treatment

MUSIC therapy: Listening to (or playing) music as a form of enjoyable distraction.

✓ You loved one may enjoy:

- Listening to their favorite type of music
- Singing hymns or other favorite songs
- Listening to instrumental or harp music
- Playing piano, guitar, or other instruments
- Dancing
- Watching others play instruments or sing live

✓ How Does it Work?

- Research indicates that listening to your preferred style of music can:
 1. Reduce pain
 2. Lower blood pressure, heart rate, and respiratory rate

✓ What Can you Do?

- Discuss with your loved one their music preferences and experiences with music
- Advocate for your loved one to have access to the items or opportunities necessary for using their preferred music as a nondrug pain management
- Assist your loved one to gather the needed equipment or device (i.e. phone, computer, tablet, radio, CD/record/cassette player, television, headphones, internet connection, etc...) to listen to music they enjoy
- Set up the equipment as needed for your loved one prior to the session
- Ask your loved one prior to beginning each session what their pain/tension level is on a 0-10 pain scale and do this again at the end of the music session
- Document pain ratings so you can share with your loved one's healthcare team

✓ **What else the Caregiver should do**

- Consider using a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to the provider on a regular basis.
- Encourage your loved one to try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on their pain in their Pain Diary

Adapted from

1. Fouladbakhsh, J.M., et al., Nondrug therapies for pain management among rural older adults. *Pain Manag Nurs*, 2011. 12(2): p. 70-81.
2. The Nursing Home Pain Management Algorithm Clinical Trial, R01 NR009100, 7/1/05 – 4/30/10; Mary Ersek (PI) Used with permission of Mary Ersek and HPNA (2009).

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