

**Music therapy beneficial for depression**

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<b>Clinical Question</b>	Compared to treatment as usual (TAU) and psychological, pharmacological, and/or other therapies, how effective is music therapy for depression?
<b>Bottom Line</b>	Music therapy, when added to TAU (e.g. psychotherapy in combination with medication, collaborative care, occupational therapy), helped people affected by depressive disorders, such as major depression, by improving symptoms related to the condition (moderate quality) and its most frequent comorbidities, such as anxiety (low quality). Additionally, social, occupational, and psychological functioning might improve among individuals who are involved in music therapy in addition to TAU (low-quality evidence). Music therapy was not associated with more or fewer adverse events than TAU (low-quality evidence). There were no differences in improving depressive symptoms between a music therapy intervention and a psychological therapy or medication only. There were also no differences between active and receptive music therapy approaches (very low-quality evidence).
<b>Caveat</b>	When providing music therapy, clinicians must be mindful that the specific methods and techniques of music therapy, including among others adaptation of musical material to individual needs, musical improvisation, and discussion of personal topics emerging through musical processes, require specialised music therapy training.
<b>Context</b>	Depression is a common problem that causes changes in mood and loss of interest and pleasure. Music therapy, an intervention that involves regular meetings with a qualified music therapist, may help in modulating moods and emotions.
<b>Cochrane Systematic Review</b>	<a href="#">Aalbers S et al. Music therapy for depression. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 11. Art. No.:</a>

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[CD004517.DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004517.pub3.](https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD004517.pub3)

This review contains nine studies involving  
421 participants.

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