



# Self-care Music Playlists

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MEDICINE *of* THE HIGHEST ORDER



# What is self-care?



# What is self-care?

## Self-care

*noun*

- the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health
- the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress
- any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health
- is NOT something that we force ourselves to do, or something we don't enjoy doing
- is NOT a selfish act
- is about knowing what we need to do in order to take care of ourselves, so that we are better able to take care of others as well

# Why music?

Music can:

- Create comfort and security
- Energize and motivate
- Increase dopamine levels/improve mood
- Cue a relaxation response
- Change, create, or enhance moods
- Distract/promote active focus
- Be a positive environmental stimulus
- Provide structure
- Elicit emotional responses and/or memories
- Decrease pain
- Lower blood pressure
- Reduce anxiety
- Stabilize heart rate



**Music is not a benign intervention!**

# Self-care Music Playlist(s)

## Getting started

- Preferred way to listen to music
  - CD
  - App/service
    - [YouTube](#)
    - [Spotify](#)
    - Pandora
    - iTunes/Apple Music
    - Amazon music
    - Google Play
    - iHeart Radio
- Best option for sound quality
  - Headphones
  - Bluetooth speaker

# Self-care Music Playlist(s)

## Set an intention

- When do you need this?
  - Drive to/from work
  - Before going to sleep
  - Transitioning to another activity
  - “Me time” vs. “other(s) time”
- Why do you need this?
  - Comfort
  - Calm
  - Motivation
  - Stress-relief
  - Frustration
  - Hope
  - Grief
  - Decompress
  - Energy
  - Venting



# Self-care Music Playlist(s)

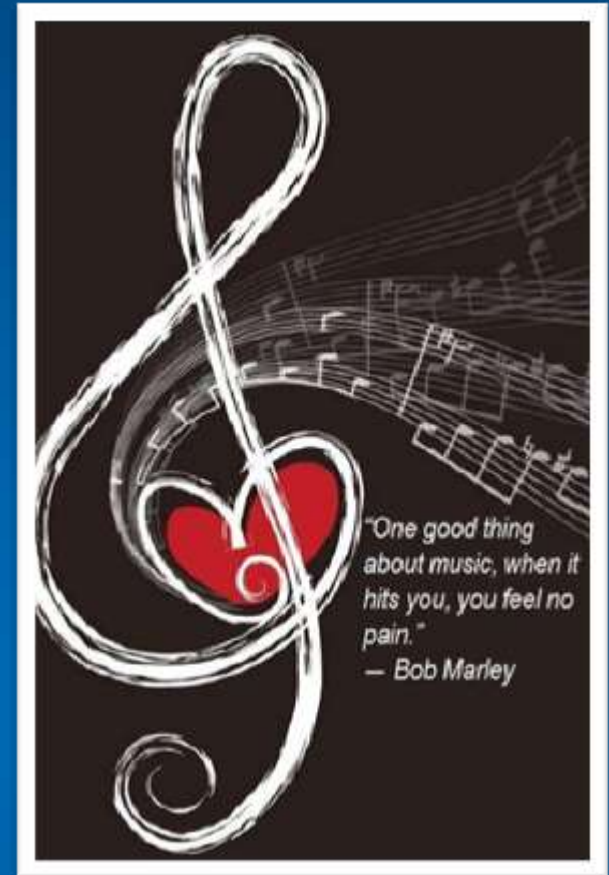
## Music selection

- Listen to songs to determine how you feel as you listen
- Consider tempo & length (<https://songbpm.com/>)
  - To calm/relax, try songs with 60-80 bpm (avg resting heartrate)
- Put songs in an order that matches the intention
  - fastest → slowest for calming/relaxing
  - slowest → fastest for energizing/motivating
- Songs may fit into more than one playlist
- Experiment with
  - Familiar verses unfamiliar music
  - Instrumental versus songs with lyrics
  - Different genres

# Self-care Music Playlist(s)

Listen and adjust

- Delete songs that don't fit
- Add songs that you discover
- Rearrange song order, if needed
- Try shuffling the songs
- Sing along, if it feels right
- [Practice mindfulness while listening](#)
  - Close your eyes (if it's safe!)
  - Breathing techniques with music





The screenshot shows the University of Rochester website. The header includes the UR logo and navigation links: Patients & Families, Education, Research, Community, About URMC, Referring Physicians, MyChart. The main content area features a video player with the title "Virtual art experiences, music playlists for stress reduction, concert broadcasts and more". Below the video, it reads "University of Rochester and Eastman School".

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/eastman-performance-medicine/for-sick-injured-artists/virtual-art-experiences-resources.aspx>

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# HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The vision is for healthcare workers to use the music on their commute to show up powerfully for those they serve, and peacefully for those they love.

### PITFALLS OF CHRONIC STRESS

Increases symptoms of anxiety depression	Decreases immune system function	Increases risk of heart attack stroke
Triggers cravings	Misinterpret neutral facial affect as hostile	Loss of libido in men & women

## REDUCE YOUR STRESS

WITH T&R  
TIM RINGGOLD

Music has been shown in research to reduce cortisol production and induce a relaxation response in the autonomic nervous system.

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# Things to consider

- Start with music that fits your current mood before shifting to music with the intent of changing your mood
- Notice how the music is impacting you emotionally
  - Music can elicit negative and positive emotions
  - Stop listening or try something else if it isn't meeting your needs
- It might take time to find the right music, especially during a time of high stress - don't worry if it doesn't click right away!
- It is okay if music is not what you need right now
- It is okay to not use songs that already hold significant meaning to avoid associating them with negative emotions or stressful situations

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“Music, uniquely among the arts, is both completely abstract and profoundly emotional. It has no power to represent anything particular or external, but it has a unique power to express inner states or feelings. Music can pierce the heart directly; it needs no mediation.”

- Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*

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# Questions?

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