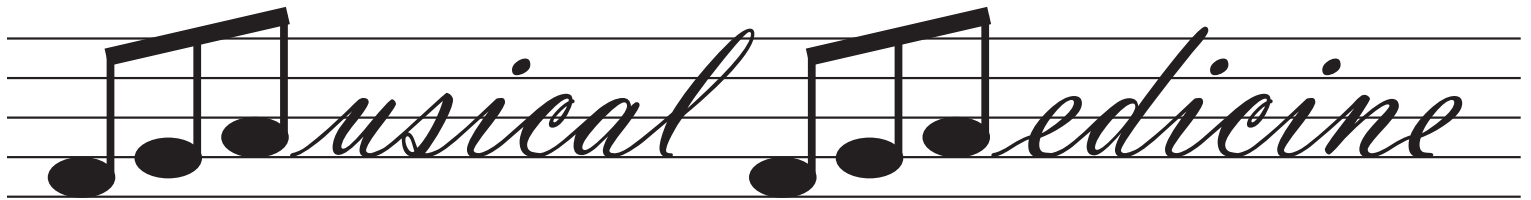


# Health

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*"Music has charms to soothe a savage breast, to soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak"*

— William Congreve, "The Mourning Bride," 1697



## Impact of music on diabetes is subject of clinical study

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**A** landmark study seeking to scientifically determine if and how music therapy impacts those with diabetes has begun at Lake Health.

The hospital system has had music therapy in place to enhance healing in its outpatient cardiac rehabilitation program for 18 years.

But little is known about the effect of music therapy on people with diabetes. A \$60,000 grant from the Kulas Foundation supports the new three-year study, which seeks 200 to 300 participants with diabetes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 23.6 million people in the United States have diabetes. That's 7.8 percent of the population.

Susan E. Mandel, a board-certified music therapist for 24 years, is chief investigator.

"Given the epidemic increase of diabetes, it's a high priority to investigate integrative approaches to treatment that offer added benefit to patients engaged in diabetes self-management training," she said.

Diabetes is unique among chronic diseases because treatment largely depends on self-management. Training provides diabetics with knowledge about diet, exercise and insulin as well as how to monitor their own blood glucose levels.

Mandel used music-assisted relaxation and imagery therapy in an earlier clinical study to assess its impact on cardiac patients. To the calming notes of music, Mandel's voice guided patients to imagine a special place as they focused on relaxing each body part.

That study showed significant differences between treatment and control groups in systolic blood pressure, anxiety and quality of life scores before and after the MARI therapy.

She and musician Daniel Kobialka made a 40-minute MARI CD, "Harmony of Mind & Body," that is being used in the diabetes study.

All study participants will receive diabetes management training before beginning the study. They will then be divided into three groups. Over a three-



**Music therapist Susan E. Mandel, left, works with Sue Fyfe at Lake East Medical Center in Painesville. Mandel is the primary investigator for a study using music therapy on diabetic patients.**

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month period, one group will listen to the CD, which will guide them in therapy exercises. A second group will attend four sessions with one of the hospital's music therapists. The third group will have no music therapy.

"The 90-minute sessions will be scheduled at different times of day to be convenient to participants' work schedules," Mandel said.

All study participants will be tested before and after music therapy for blood pressure, hemoglobin A1C (blood sugar), body mass index, anxiety and stress.

Mandel's husband is the study's medical adviser, Lake Health endocrinologist Dr. Martin L. Mandel.

"We've known for many years that patients who effectively learn to control blood glucose, blood pressure and blood lipids have decreased occurrence of serious complications, including cardiovascular disease, kidney damage, blindness and lower limb amputations," he said. "It will be very interesting to see how augmenting diabetes self-management education with music therapy affects physiological

outcomes, such as blood pressure and blood sugar levels, and psychological outcomes, such as anxiety and stress."

Although most people intuitively realize that music can soothe, inspire or excite, clinical studies framed around music therapy provide scientific measurements, Susan E. Mandel said. She's witnessed many positive impacts of music among patients.

"When I was working in cardiac rehabilitation, a patient of mine who I just loved, collapsed," she recalled. "She had emergency kidney surgery and went into a coma. When I came into work I went to see her in intensive care where I recognized the signs of impending death, although I hadn't been informed of that."

"I knew she was a devout Christian, so I hummed 'Amazing Grace' and 'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands' to her. There was no immediate response," she said.

"But the next morning I got a phone call that she'd come out of the coma. She said all she could remember was hearing an angel sing."