

is used in hospitals and clinics to alleviate pain, reduce stress, restore order, beauty, hope, and meaning in patients' lives.

The right music, in the right setting, transports her, she says, to a different plane of consciousness.

Reports and anecdotes from around the world support Mrs. Miller's beliefs about the healing benefits of music. Studies covering everyone from delivering mothers to cancer patients have demonstrated the phenomenal soothing power of music, which can speed recovery, ease pain, and reduce anxiety, stress levels, and even arterial pressure.

In England, patients who listened to classical music while undergoing local anesthesia recovered more quickly and reported fewer complications. In Canada, patients exposed to 15 minutes of soothing music needed half the sedatives and anesthetic drugs that other patients required. In Poland, patients with severe headaches had significantly less need for medication when exposed to concert music for six months. And in Japan, surgical patients listening to music just before anesthesia had increased levels of alpha brain waves and decreased levels of stress hormones.

At the University of Colorado, researchers were able to reduce patients' mean arterial pressure, both systole and diastole, by playing "sedative music." In Austin, Texas, women had a decreased need for anesthesia during childbirth when listening to music. In Provo, Utah, babies who regularly heard live singing gained more weight and were released from the intensive care unit three days earlier than those who didn't. In a study in three New York hospitals, babies exposed to Brahms' *Lullaby* six times a day were ready to go home a week earlier than controls. And at UMass Memorial Health Care, harp music is prescribed in lieu of tranquilizers for cancer patients.



Perhaps more impressively, music has proved effective in treating a range of neurological and psychological disorders. Researchers in Colorado found that a half hour of rhythmic stimulation each day improved cadence, stride, and foot placement in stroke patients. A University of California, Los Angeles study showed a 59 percent reduction in auditory hallucinations in hospitalized

schizophrenics who listened to music. A music professor at Northern Illinois University taught patients with Parkinson's disease to play the harp in groups; many of these patients achieved remarkable fluidity and freedom of movement. Other studies have found significant increases in concentration, learning, and lucidity among children with learning disabilities and autism.