

## **Tune In, Chill Out**

We all know music is good for the soul. Now, researchers are finding that it's good for the body too.

Listening to music is one of the most enjoyable ways to relax. The truth is that relaxation goes deep. Music can lower your heart rate, blood pressure and breathing rate. It also can help reduce pain and relieve insomnia. A case in point: In a study of patients requiring brain surgery with only local anesthesia, music was shown to calm their nerves—literally. Listening to a musical soundtrack, especially melodic music with undefined rhythm lessened the activity of neurons deep in the brain. The surgical patients who listened to music often closed their eyes or even fell asleep and snored during their procedures.

Of course, you don't need to wait for a medical necessity to be musically inspired. Listen to some soothing sounds at home, or put on something upbeat to get moving. And if you want to tune in to some live music, check out the concerts listed on the next page. Fresh air, a nutritious picnic (see "Pack a Healthy Picnic") and the sounds you love—what could be better?

***John Muir Health Magazine, August/September 2011***