Music and mood are intertwined for many of us — and as it turns out, that’s no different for our furry friends! Music therapy is an increasingly popular way to naturally soothe the sorrows of both cats and dogs.

Music has charms
To soothe the savage beast

1. The universal language
Looking for a way to decrease anxiety and agitation? Music therapy has been demonstrated to do both by lowering heart rate, blood pressure and respiratory rate. The effect is so powerful that it can even interrupt compulsive and fear-driven behaviors like self-mutilation and over-excitement!

2. Good vibrations
Vets are finding music especially useful for defusing tension in the exam room — and unlike medications, the effects are immediate! But it can also be used in a therapeutic setting to deliver a boost to pets’ overall wellness through increased endorphin levels, improved immune function and lowered levels of stress hormones.

3. Easing ears (and fears!)
When the noises of the outside world cause fear, music therapy can help. Start by helping your pet associate soothing music with a calm, relaxed state, and then play it as needed. For more advanced cases of noise phobia, your vet may also recommend desensitizing your pet through controlled exposure to recordings of trigger sounds (think thunderstorms or traffic).

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4 jarring genres
Not just any music will do. In fact, loud, upbeat genres like heavy metal actually further agitate pets. Studies have shown that canines take a shine to calming classical music like Mozart and Beethoven, reducing the stress levels of shelter dogs — and thus possibly increasing their chances of being adopted!

5 sweet mew-sic
Naturally, feline tastes in music are a bit more… discerning. While cats do seem to respond to classical music, studies have shown that they far prefer music that has been psycho-acoustically designed just for them. The music is commercially available and incorporates elements that mimic natural cat noises such as purring and meowing.

Music can definitely enrich the lives of our four-legged family members. But be sure to check with your vet before using it to treat or manage a health concern!

Sniff out more on this topic! Visit GoPetplan.com/Aug2016-health-tip

next month: the big apple
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