ROCK'N'ROLL MEDICINE

Researchers say long-loved rock music can boost baby boomer's health and well-being.
By Paul Charman

It turns out that reconnecting with favourite experiences, including the music of youth, can be better for you than a whole bottle of anti-depressants.

Researchers at the University of Southampton have found that, even for forward-looking people, the triggering of happy memories from days gone by can be happily positive. And memories associated with music seem to be particularly powerful in this regard.

Nostalgia had been considered a disorder ever since the term was coined by a 17th century Swiss physician who attributed wildness, maniacal and physical maladies to their longing to return home — nostos in Greek, and the accompanying pain, algos.

During the 19th and 20th centuries it was classified as an "immigrant psychosis", a form of "melancholia" or a "mentally expressive compulsive disorder".

But academics at Southampton beg to differ.

Dr Constantine Sedikides has found nostalgia to be common among the world, including in children as young as seven who look back fondly on birthdays and vacations. Defining features are the same everywhere — reminiscences about friends and family members, holidays, weddings, songs, sunsets, lakes.

"The stories tend to feature the self as the protagonist surrounded by close friends," he says. "People who are more nostalgic can counteract loneliness, boredom and anxiety. "It makes people more generous to strangers and more tolerant of outsiders. Couples feel closer and look happier when they're sharing nostalgic memories. And on cold days people use nostalgia to literally feel warmer," he said.

"Nostalgia has a painful side — it's a bittersweet emotion — but the net effect is to make life seem more meaningful and death less frightening. When people speak wistfully of the past, they become more optimistic and inspired about the future," said Dr Sedikides.

Conversations with longtime Fleetwood Mac and Springsteen fans bear out these findings. They said positive memories gained over many years and shared with family, friends and loved ones, were a big part of appeal of the music they loved.

THE DIFFERENCE IN BLADDER CANCER DETECTION

Did you know that blood in your urine could be a sign of bladder cancer?

If you see blood in your pee, it does not necessarily mean you have bladder cancer, but it is important to tell you doctor straight away, because detecting it early can really make a difference.

Cxbladder is a non-invasive urine test for the detection of bladder cancer that gives your doctor actionable results and can give you peace of mind.

For further information, please speak to your doctor or visit us at www.cxbladder.com