

The Terrace Garden at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in Portland, Oregon, serves birthing moms, cardiovascular ICU patients, families and employees. PHOTO COURTESY OF LEGACY HEALTH

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When someone is sick or recovering from surgery, loved ones frequently send flowers or plants. But do plants actually help people feel better? Research proves they do.

In fact, plants and flowers have powerful healing properties. Any exposure to nature, even viewing landscape from windows, makes people feel better and heal more quickly.

## Plants Make Life Better

# Plants have healing powers.

Studies conducted in health care settings show that exposure to nature promotes healing, both physiologically and mentally.<sup>1</sup> Having plants in patient recovery rooms reduces the time needed for healing.

Flowers and plants are so soothing that even passive exposure to nature promotes healing and "can significantly speed up recovery time."<sup>2</sup>

Hospital patients with plants in their rooms display less fatigue and pain, shorter hospital stays, less anxiety, and higher hospital and room satisfaction, according to another study.<sup>3</sup>

By Elizabeth Petersen

#### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup>Wolf, K.L., S. Krueger and K. Flora. (2014). Healing and therapy — A literature review. From *Green Cities: Good Health* ([www.greenhealth.washington.edu](http://www.greenhealth.washington.edu)). School of Environmental and Forest Resources, College of the Environment, University of Washington.

<sup>2</sup>Hall, Charles R., and Madeline W. Dickson. (2011). Economic, environmental, and health/well-being benefits associated with green industry products and services: A review. *Journal of Environmental Horticulture*, 29(2):96-103.

<sup>3</sup>Park, S.H., and R.H. Mattson. (2009). Ornamental indoor plants in hospital rooms enhanced health outcomes of patients recovering from surgery. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 15, 9:975-980.

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