

Relaxation Exercises

At times, it may be hard to relax due to worry and stress. Being able to relax can make you feel better. Relaxation is letting go of physical and emotional stress. Relaxation can lead to a feeling of peacefulness. There are different ways to relax. You will need to find the best ways that work for you. Here are some ideas to help you get started.

Music:

Many people have favorite music that helps them relax. Choose music that is soothing to you. Music played by itself or used with other forms of relaxation can be very calming.

Physical Exercise:

Exercise is a good way to lower stress. It can also help you prepare for relaxation by releasing muscle tension in the body. Exercise releases a natural body substance called endorphin, which creates a feeling of well-being.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation:

Some people cannot relax due to muscle tension. Progressive muscle relaxation is a way to decrease tension in your muscles. This is done by alternating the tensing and relaxing of different muscle groups throughout the body.

Breathing Exercises:

You may notice that you forget to breathe when you are tense. Breathing exercises can be used to help reduce your stress. Please ask a member of your health care team for the patient education handout, [Non-Drug Pain Relief: Relaxation with Breathing Exercises.](#)

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

Positive Thoughts:

Tension can be created by negative thoughts or beliefs. If you have negative thoughts, try to replace them with positive statements such as:

- I am doing the best that I can.
- I respect myself.
- I care for my well-being.

Imagery Exercises:

An imagery exercise is when you use your imagination to create a thought or image that will distract you from your stress. For example:

- Think of a time and place when you felt safe and comfortable. Imagine those surroundings, the sights, the smells and the sounds. Bring as much of that experience back to the here and now as possible. Whenever you feel ready, take a deep breath and open your eyes.

Where can I find more information on relaxation exercises?

Books and compact discs (CD's) on relaxation exercises can be found at the library or bookstores. You may also find apps with this information for your electronic device.