

Relaxation Techniques

What are relaxation techniques?

Relaxation techniques are ways to quiet your body and calm your mind. They help you deal with stress, anxiety, and the pressures of everyday life.

What is stress?

When you feel stressed, your body releases chemicals into your blood. These chemicals give you the energy to fight or to escape. This helps if you are in physical danger. But if you have stress caused by something you cannot fight or escape, the chemicals keep building up. This raises your blood pressure and makes your heart work harder. This kind of stress can affect your physical and mental health. Many office visits to healthcare providers are for problems related to stress, such as:

- Back pain, headaches, or stomach aches
- Change in appetite, heartburn or upset stomach
- Low energy
- Tense muscles
- Trouble focusing or remembering things
- Trouble sleeping

Learning to relax can:

- Help you focus better on work or other activities
- Help you sleep better
- Take your mind off what is bothering you
- Help with physical symptoms by decreasing heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension

What can I do to relax?

Relaxation skills include:

- Deep breathing: Focusing on taking slow deep breaths
- Mental imaging: Picturing yourself in a calm place and letting your muscles relax
- Mindfulness: Focusing only on the present moment, without judging, and not thinking of the past or future
- Progressive muscle relaxation: Tensing and relaxing your body, one muscle group at a time

If you would like to learn more about relaxation techniques, check your local community college or community center. They may offer classes in relaxation techniques.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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